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Handbook

Interviewing Skills for Child Support Workers

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Child Support Enforcement
National Institute for Child Support Enforcement

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INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES FOR CHILD SUPPORT WORKERS

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INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES FOR CHILD SUPPORT WORKERS

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This publication was prepared by the National Institute for Ch
Support Enforcement under contract number 600-81-0062 from t
Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). NICSE is operat
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December, 1981

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Institute materials are based on a number of sources. While it is not possible for us to thank each and every individual who assists in course development, we would like to extend particular thanks to the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to the development of this course: Meldon Kelsey, Director of OCSE in Albany, New York, for his staff's cooperation and contributions; to Dennis Cooper, Institute Manager, who served as content advisor; to Dennis Corriveau of OCSE, for his review and comments; and to the authors of the Supplementary Readings, for granting us permission to reprint their material.

MODULE I
COMMUNICATION

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The most productive interviews occur when both the interviewer and the interviewee are relaxed. Unfortunately, child support interviewers are required to work in an environment that is inherently stressful simply because of the nature of issues which must be addressed.

Two factors that can help the interviewer to be more comfortable with the interviewing task are experience and skill. This Handbook discusses skills and techniques that can contribute to more successful interviews. It examines techniques and approaches that can serve to make the client comfortable and improve the likelihood that relevant information will be obtained. However, before discussing specific interviewing skills and strategies, we will review the process of communication. After describing the basic components of communication, we will consider the communication process in the context of child support enforcement.

Because we are concerned with improving communications in the context of the child support field, we will focus in this text on the specific types of communication that occur in this field. In particular, we will consider the interview as a special form of communication, and discuss the various types of interviews that workers conduct as they process child support cases. However, before we can discuss ways to enhance the interviewing skills of workers in the field of child support we need to examine how communication takes place. The following section presents an overview of the communication process, and defines some of the issues affecting communication in the child support field.

COMMUNICATION: A COMPLEX PROCESS

We are bombarded daily by messages that stimulate us to respond. We are stimulated to buy goods by advertisements that appeal to our needs and desires. We elect public officials whose communication skills and charisma cause us to respond favorably to them. On the negative side, we also hear that marriages fail and riots erupt because people fail to communicate. Therefore, we continually are urged to improve our communication skills so that we, too, will be able to stimulate others to respond to us in favorable ways.

Since the beginning of time, in fact, we have looked for ways to communicate with others. From primitive man's cave drawings through highly complex computer languages, we have experimented with ways to tell others about the events in our lives. Man's persistent interest in narrative has led to the development of

various alphabets, which code language, and grammars, which link the units of language. Gutenberg's invention of the printing press, which enabled man to document speech on a wide scale basis, fostered the growth of a literate public, who is served by the press.

It is not suprising, therefore, that social scientists and linguists have become increasingly interested in the subject of communication. During this century, in fact, we have moved beyond theories of communication that confine themselves to analyses of just the verbal components of language. Sociologists and psychologists have advanced the study of this field by focusing attention on the nonverbal aspects of communication--i.e., physical gesture, eye movement, spatial relationships. Moreover, Benjamin Lee Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis explains how crucially communication is affected by the cultural background of speakers./1/ What this explosion in attention has done is to expose us to the complexities of the communication process. Communication is much more than the transmission of one and the same message from Party A to Party B. The multiple components of the communication process are examined in closer detail in the following section.

Speech, language, and paralanguage. In "Speech is More Than Language," Peter Woolfson makes a crucial distinction between speech and language./2/ In his opinion, how a person uses language when he or she speaks greatly affects communication. For example, in writing, we always make choices about the words we will use to structure a thought. Sometimes, in an effort to save time and paper, we will use jargon. If the person to whom we are speaking or writing is familiar with our jargon, it can be a useful shorthand. If our listener is a coworker, for example, he or she may understand very quickly our use of specialized words and terms. In addition, the coworker's comprehension of what we say may help him or her feel accepted and "with it." By contrast, the new worker will feel overwhelmed and alienated by jargon. Likewise, clients will not necessarily understand the jargon of child support and may feel that you are condescending in your use of it. In addition to being a source of clarity, then, jargon can cause confusion and alienation.

Like our choice of language, our manipulation of paralanguage affects the response of our listeners. Paralanguage encompasses both the quality of the voice and the patterns of vocalization we employ during speech. For example, many Americans reacted strongly to Jimmy Carter the first time they heard him speak. Because his voice quality--tone, range, and particular pace--was unfamiliar to many of his Northeastern listeners, he tended to strike them as an "outsider"; to his Southern counterparts, his voice quality was an endearing trait.

Vocalizations, the second major component of paralanguage, includes vocal characterizers, vocal qualifiers, and vocal segregates. Vocal characterizers convey attitude and affect response by pairing the spoken word with a second message. For example, "John is coming for a visit," carries a different message when said with a smile than it does when said with a groan.

Vocal qualifiers include the intensity of our speech, and such characteristics as drawling or clipping. Parents know how differently a child will react to "come here" said in a normal tone and to "come here" said loudly. Intensity is responsible for the difference in the child's perception of the parent's message. Finally, vocal segregates, such as "uh-huh," and "sh-h-h," can substitute for, more conventional language, and shape or perception of a person's message. Archie Bunker's raspberry communicates volumes, as does a child's "Gee whiz" response to a reprimand.

Kinesics. Kinesics, or body movements, convey messages nonverbally. It is absolutely essential for those who wish to communicate effectively to learn how to read people through their body movements. For example, if we enter our boss's office and he or she looks up, puts down a pen and sits back, then we are inclined to feel welcome. By contrast, if we enter and he or she keeps writing, we may feel that we are not particularly welcome.

Although kinesic responses can be manipulated, they tend to be more spontaneous than speech. Consequently, kinesics can provide extremely valuable clues about the validity of a statement. In fact, when verbal language conflicts with a kinesic message, we generally should place heavier emphasis on the latter.

Eye movement is one type of kinesics. As Montagu and Matson state, in The Human Connection, "Face-to-face communication normally begins at extended visual distance, during the stage of approach--the prologue to meeting--when the participants come into mutual view and the internal mechanisms of person-perception, 'checking up,' and self-presentation are set in motion"./3/ Explicit messages also are transmitted through the eyes. On a crowded street, for example, we look ahead, and exchange a signal with the person approaching. This signal states, "I'll go to the left, you go to the right."

Another component of kinesics deals with physical space. Different cultures have developed different concepts of space. Americans, in particular, react unfavorably to a sense of crowding. When we feel that our space has been violated, we feel uncomfortable, tend to look straight ahead, and avoid having eye contact with anyone. We try to hold people "at arm's length," because we are uncomfortable with physical proximity. People from other cultures do not always have our sense of discomfort with physical proximity. What to us is a violation of privacy, may be to them an indication of intimacy.

A corollary to space is touch. Our culture regards touching as an intimate gesture, a way of sharing our personal space with another person. While we may regard a hand on someone's shoulder as a gesture of welcome or acceptance, we begin to feel uneasy if the hand remains on the shoulder. People of Mediterranean background may greet each other by kissing; they are surprised when Americans do not respond similarly.

In addition to using language effectively to communicate with, and gather information from interviewees, the child support worker also can learn a great deal of insight and information from the nonverbal signals that are provided by the interviewee. Moreover, the child support worker should make use of nonverbal communication to provide support to, and develop a sense of empathy with, the interviewee. As we discuss further in Module III, correct interpretation of kinesic signals can greatly enhance the communication that takes place between interviewer and interviewee. By increasing his or her knowledge about kinesic signals, the interviewer can enhance the communication taking place. (For further discussion of nonverbal communication, see Module III.)

Cultural background and personal values. Historically, Americans have taken pride in what is called our "melting pot" heritage. While different ethnic and cultural groups have been assimilated to varying degrees, however, we have not, and will not, become a Nation of homogeneous people, who share identical values, beliefs, and attitudes. On the contrary, strong cultural differences still exist in our country, and manifest themselves in people's behavior and communication patterns. These variations become most noticeable when members of individual ethnic, cultural, or geographic groups mingle with individuals from other groups. A New Yorker's speech and behavior receive no special attention in that city, for example, but if the New Yorker travels to Nashville, he or she may be regarded as aggressive, demanding, or rude. A native of Milwaukee visiting Los Angeles might be considered taciturn and easily manipulated because of his or her soft-spokenness and quiet demeanor; in fact, that Milwaukee native may be reflective and open-minded.

Values, beliefs, and attitudes play an enormous part in communication. Each of us carries with us a set of values, beliefs, and attitudes that give shape to what we think, hear, and say. It is a serious mistake for us to assume that our values--our perspectives--are shared by everyone else. On the contrary, especially in the context of an interview, we need to determine how our preconceptions differ from those of the individual whom we are interviewing.

Communication: a definition. All of the factors we have mentioned--language, paralanguage, kinesics, culture, and values--need to be in the forefront of our minds when we are examining the subject of communication. By increasing our awareness of these factors, we will understand better both the complexity of the communication process and ways to enhance our skills.

For our purposes, communication can be defined as the "exchange of information by two people who have a relationship with each other." As Walton Boshear and Karl G. Albrecht discuss in Understanding People: Models and Concepts: "When two people are interacting with one another, a third factor is introduced, the relationship itself." They go on to argue that, "If a relationship gives the parties partial or complete satisfaction of their individual needs, then they must apply some of their individual efforts and resources to the maintenance and growth of the relationship itself" (100)./4/ This notion of developing and maintaining a relationship with the receiver of a message is crucial to successful communication. In the child support arena, in particular, workers must understand the specific needs and desires of those whom they interview, if they hope to communicate successfully with them.

In the case of the child support interview, for example, the successful worker needs to be attuned at all times to his or her own need to acquire information from an interviewee, and to the interviewee's willingness or reluctance to share it. To enhance his or her communication skills, the child support worker needs first to refine his or her ability to recognize his or her own and the interviewee's states of mind. Only then can the worker strive to make these states compatible, to establish a cordial relationship with the interviewee, and to make the interviewee willing to cooperate in the process of gathering and assessing information.

There also is a need in the context of child support for the caseworker to establish a foundation of trust between communicating parties. This foundation is especially difficult for the child support worker to develop, because he or she constantly is creating an unbalanced relationship between him or herself and the client. That is, the child support worker gathers private information, but does not give it in return. This can create a situation where the interviewee becomes unresponsive.

THE INTERVIEW AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION

The challenge that faces child support workers is to encourage the interviewee to disclose information. While there are as many definitions of interviewing as there are of communication, most definitions recognize that the goal of an interview is to obtain information that primarily will benefit just one of the parties concerned. Consequently, we may define the interview as "a dialogue between two or more people, for the purpose of obtaining specific information." In the context of the child support field, this theory would suggest that the interview occurs primarily to benefit the worker, who needs information to proceed with his or her work. However, child support interviews will be more successful to the extent that the interviewer and interviewee believe that the process benefits both of them. If the interviewee cooperates and provides needed information, his or her child may well receive regular child support payments. If individual cases

are fully developed and carefully processed, the workers may well find their workloads lightened and their efforts rewarded. In addition to benefitting the interviewer and interviewee, the successful child support interview benefits society at large. To the extent that a given interview gathers information that moves a case forward to resolution, it saves the taxpayer's dollars.

In order for an interview to be successful, the interviewee should keep in mind the differences between interviewing and conversing. In interviews, one party assumes greater responsibility than the other for control and direction of the dialogue. In ordinary conversation, the responsibility is more likely to be shared. In The Social Work Interview,/5/ Alfred Kadushin makes the following recommendations to the interviewer:

- The interviewer needs to determine the balance of control during the interview. For example, if the interviewer finds that the interviewee is cooperating, he or she may allow the interviewee to pace the dialogue.

- The interviewer must recognize the difference between highly and loosely structured interviews. In general, loosely structured interviews are profitable only after a secure, trusting relationship has been established. Therefore, they are inappropriate for most child support interviews.

- The interviewer must know how to balance active and passive interviewing styles.

- The interview must strike a balance between the needs of the agency and the needs of the client.

All of these issues are discussed at greater length in the following modules. Before we proceed in our discussion of interviewing procedures, however, we need to describe the various situations in which the interviewing skills of the child support worker are tested.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILD SUPPORT INTERVIEWS

A significant number of child support workers are responsible for interviewing people. Among other things, child support interviews may try to determine paternity, to stimulate reluctant parents to pay regularly on their child support obligations, or to elicit information from embarrassed women accompanied by small children. There is a growing consensus that child support interviews are particularly challenging. Reasons for this are discussed below.

Private subject matter. Because child support interviews tend to deal with matters that generally are considered to be quite private, they are particularly challenging for the interviewer. Probing into a person's sexual history is especially difficult when

that person is a stranger with whom no relationship of trust or understanding has been established. The child support worker also must deal with the financial history of people, especially in cases where child support payments are in arrears. This, too, is a sensitive topic.

Unequal relationship between interviewer and interviewee. The problems posed by the sensitive nature of the subject matter of child support interviews are compounded by the unequal relationship that necessarily exists between interviewer and interviewee. We already have mentioned that the relationship between the worker and client does not allow for the mutual exchange of information. Instead the client is asked to disclose private knowledge with little reciprocity from the worker.

It is imperative that the child support interviewer be comfortable with the relationship that is developed with the client. Unlike participants in a conversation, who enjoy equal status, the interviewer and interviewee play very different parts in their dialogue. Moreover, it generally is the interviewer's role to assume full responsibility for directing the dialogue. The added dimension of authority can make it difficult for him or her to serve this function. Nevertheless, to facilitate the task of gathering information on highly personal matters, the interviewer must remain aware at all times of the differences between the roles of the interviewer and the interviewee.

Objectivity and authority. The interviewer can enhance his or her authority by continually reassessing personal biases and by thorough preparation. He or she also must remain objective while dealing with the interviewee, in order to create an atmosphere of rationality, calmness, and control. At the same time, the interviewer must be able to encourage cooperation on the part of the interviewee.

Complexity of the interviewing job. Compounding the factors that we have discussed in the preceding paragraphs is the difficulty of the job itself. If you reflect on an interview that you have conducted recently, you will be able to identify a number of activities that go on simultaneously during interviews. In addition to asking questions, listening to responses, and discussing various issues, a number of other, more subjective activities generally take place. These include the following:

- Interviewer assesses whether strategy selected during the planning stage is working
- Interviewer continually reassesses and revises the phrasing of questions
- Interviewer engages in note taking and record keeping

- Both interviewer and interviewee give and receive verbal and non-verbal feedback--including listening, observing, and responding

- Interviewer assesses personal biases, to minimize their impact on the interview process.

The sheer multitude of these activities makes the interviewing job a difficult and challenging one. In addition, the worker must make a conscious effort to listen with all of his or her sense; because settings for interviews rarely are free of distractions.

Beliefs, attitudes, and values. It is a mistake for the interviewer to assume that all interviewees share his or her own values. In fact, mistaken assumptions of shared values can cause the child support worker to become frustrated and stressful during the interview situation. By contrast, if the interviewer can identify areas in which he or she shares values with the interviewee, he or she is well on the way to establishing a productive relationship with the interviewee.

In Beliefs, Attitudes and Values: A Theory of Organization and Change, Milton Rokeach discusses the extensive influence that our beliefs, attitudes, and values exert on our perceptions and interactions./6/ He goes on to point out that not all of these are equally important to the individual and that, the more central the belief, value, or attitude, the more resistant it is to change. This concept is crucial to the interviewer as he or she attempts to establish an effective relationship with the interviewee. The interviewer needs to be able not only to identify gaps between his or her convictions and those of the interviewee, but be able to focus his or her attention on areas where the two sets of convictions are complementary. This exercise will increase the likelihood that the interviewer will develop an empathetic relationship with the interviewee.

Beliefs, attitudes, and values can threaten the success of the child support interview when the child support worker is unaware of the importance that his or her beliefs, attitudes, and values have in determining his or her reaction and behavior toward the interviewee. While it might be desirable to interview without any subjectivity, it is impossible to do so because of the complex nature of communication.

Bias during the interview. As Kahn and Cannell point out in The Dynamics of Interviewing: Theory, Techniques and Cases, strong relationships exist among environmental influences, psychological characteristics, and behavior./7/ These relationships shape our responses to every situation, event, or comment. In the case of the child support interview, for example, the questions that the interviewer poses necessarily are considered by the interviewee against the background of his or her upbringing, psyche, and

sense of decorum. The same is true for the interviewer, whose job is to gather information. As we discuss in the preceding section, it is important for the interviewer to identify potential differences in perspective between him- or herself and the interviewee. Overlooked conflicts in bias or perspective can be detrimental; recognized ones can be minimized.

Stress and burnout. Two outcomes of the interviewer's job, that now are being examined throughout the social services, are burnout and stress. Stress for child support interviewers can be a manifestation of many factors--being uncomfortable with your own authority, the size of the caseload, unshared value systems, the working conditions, the difficulty of the interviewing job itself, the lack of pay, and the lack of job and physical security. A burned-out worker is the one who puts in his or her 8 hours, trying to maintain identity in the face of obstacles that are perceived to be insurmountable. Stress and burnout may cause the worker to leave the job just at the time when his or her skills have been finely tuned. In such cases, workers really may feel that no worthwhile social program is worth the aggravation they are experiencing. To combat this tendency, and to remain fully effective, the worker periodically should assess his or her own stress levels. While there are many strategies for dealing with stress--including regular exercise, vacations, and time out from the daily ritual--stress can be alleviated by discussing its sources with co-workers. Certainly, co-workers have the greatest understanding of the stresses on the job. They also tend to know best how to alleviate it.

For example, you may suggest to your supervisor that a certain amount of time be spent each week discussing particularly traumatic or rewarding experiences of the week. By sharing your knowledge base with others, and by learning from their experiences, you may learn to deal more effectively with your clients. At the least, you will be working in a sympathetic and understanding atmosphere where you can receive non-judgmental support from people in similar situations.

How does the child support worker bridge the gap between his or her own values, beliefs, and attitudes and those of the interviewee? A very valuable technique is to establish a pattern of objectivity while maintaining authority. This pattern is less wearing on the interviewer than trying to develop empathy with all the interviewees. Empathy demands that the interviewer put him- or herself in the place of the client, in an attempt to understand, if not agree with, the framework within which the client is operating. It is relatively easy to develop empathy among people of similar backgrounds, and it is possible in almost every case to find at least one area of shared concern or experience with another individual. However, given the time and caseload restraints workers face, the difficulty of finding these areas may contribute to the high stress level of the job.

Four key techniques can help the child support interviewer to develop objectivity while maintaining authority with interviewees:

- Ask questions that are designed to suface the interviewee's feelings or emotional responses to an occurrence. Answers to such questions often are psychologically revealing, and may lead to the development of empathy.

- Review the case file, particularly the activity sheet (see Module V), to identify shared experiences with the interviewee--i.e., places, events. Notes on previous interviews also can help to create a sense of "person."

- Keep an open mind. Remember to weigh personal biases in light of the biases of others.

- Maintain a firm attitude towards the interviewee without creating an oppressive, stifling atmosphere.

These four techniques seem deceptively simple. However, the interviewer not only needs to ask these questions but to ask them in a way that encourages a frank response. (The phrasing of questions is discussed in Module III.)

TYPES OF CHILD SUPPORT INTERVIEWS

As we mention earlier in this text, many types of interviews are conducted in the child support setting. The worker has to deal with such individuals as: the custodial relative, the absent parent, attorneys, employers, and other interested parties. Each of these interviews are discussed below.

Interviews with the custodial relative. The custodial relative is the first person with whom the child support office normally has contact. When he or she applies for assistance, or when a non-AFDC custodial relative decides to pursue child support, an intake interview is held. The purpose of this interview is to gather specific data in order to determine whether the applicant is eligible for service, to set up a case file, and to obtain enough information to facilitate the location of the absent parent. Since an intake form generally is used to document the information, this interview tends to be quite structured. For further discussion, see Module III.

The custodial relative may be interviewed by a worker in the child support office as often as the worker or office policy deems it appropriate. Generally, workers question the custodial relative when they uncover information that disagrees with information obtained during the intake interview. Any information that can change or cease the assistance grant should be investigated. This helps keep the records up to date and accurate, and reduces the likelihood of fraud. Outside sources often give the child support office statements that the worker will want to clarify through additional interviewing. Examples are:

- The child/children do not live with the custodial relative
- The absent parent lives with the custodial relative
- The child/children are self-supporting
- The child/children have reached the age of majority
- The custodial relative has additional income.

Interviews with the absent parent. In some jurisdictions, the alleged absent parent is interviewed before the court hearing. The purpose of the interview is to find out if the alleged father disputes or acknowledges paternity. If he disputes paternity, a defense must be built for the custodial relative in preparation of the paternity case hearing. If the alleged father acknowledges paternity on a voluntary basis, he signs a form that states that he acknowledges himself to be the father of the child in question. This form is called a paternity agreement form, which is notarized and filed with the court. In some localities, if paternity is established before the court hearing, the only issue that remains to be settled at the court hearing is the support obligation amount and mode of payments.

The absent parent is interviewed when payment amounts are established and/or when the court instructs him or her to make payments directly to the child support enforcement office. At this interview, he or she is told how payments are to be made and is given an explanation of the office's policies and procedures. The worker makes certain that the absent parent understands all the procedures. In many child support offices, the absent parent is asked to sign a form which lists all the office policies and information regarding the order. This document also may be used as evidence that the absent parent knows the location of the child support office should that defense arise. This signed document serves as proof that the absent parent has agreed to follow all the instructions stated on the form.

After the support order is established, the absent parent can be interviewed by a worker in the child support office as often as the worker or office policy deems it appropriate. Again, outside sources may give information to the child support office that justifies additional interviewing. New circumstances occur that lead to the adjustment of the support obligation amount or to a new agreement on how arrearages will be paid. Examples are:

- The absent parent now has custody of the child
- The absent parent has received a large salary increase
- The absent parent has been laid off or terminated from his or her job
- The absent parent has become disabled.

Interviews with attorneys. Attorneys may initiate interviews with workers in the child support office in order to obtain information regarding a specific case. If the attorney is representing the custodial relative, he or she should be given all the data that may be helpful in the prosecution of the case. This will facilitate the establishment of orders and the collection of arrearages. However, if the attorney is representing the absent parent, it is in the office's best interest to direct the attorney's request for information to the counsel for the child support office.

Interviews with employers. Employers often have contact with the child support office because court orders have instructed them to make deductions for the wages of the absent parent. The court order usually is self-explanatory, but many employers still want further verbal clarification of their obligations. In such interviews, the worker should explain the procedures and the consequences of non-cooperation. He or she also should remain congenial with the employer, since the employer may be able to provide valuable information at a later date. For example, he or she is more likely to volunteer information regarding the salary and work status of the absent parent if the child support worker has established a congenial relationship with him or her.

Interviews with other parties. In addition to conducting interviews with custodial relatives, absent parents, attorneys, and employers, the worker may interview a number of other people on a one-time basis. Especially when the establishment of paternity is at issue, many individuals may enter the picture, including relatives, other agency personnel, court personnel, medical technicians, and witnesses. While preparing a paternity suit for a court hearing, extensive preparation is needed; in fact, the outcome of the hearing often depends on how much preparation took place. A wide range of people often may supply accurate and detailed information concerning the relationship between the recipient and the alleged absent parent. They may be able to remember when the couple started dating, how often they saw each other, and if they ever cohabitated. These examples, along with many other pieces of information, may be very helpful during the court proceeding. Other parties also may provide useful information for locate and enforcement.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

The smooth functioning of all social services, including child support enforcement, depends on records which document past events and present conditions to shape future outcomes. All interviews conducted under the auspices of the Child Support Enforcement Program should result in construction of a case record or the accumulation of additional information for an existing case record. Supplementing the direct communication between worker and the parties are various types of written documents, including the following:

- Copies of case records, usually consisting of various State forms, official court orders, etc.

- Copies of correspondence sent by various workers, and/or the parties in the case

- Case activity sheet, which records the "calendar" of activities.

Effective written communication is a crucial element in successful case construction for several reasons. First of all, because it is likely that different workers will process a case at different times, it is imperative that the case file accurately reflect the data collected and any actions taken. The need for accuracy and updating eliminates backtracking, which is expensive, time-consuming, and frustrating to all concerned. In addition, as the case record will be used in the event that legal remedies are undertaken, it must be thorough and correct. The absence of accurate and complete information may lead to cases being dismissed, with the ultimate result being frustration between the child support agency and the legal staff. Finally, certain Federal regulations mandate that specific elements be included in the case record. For further discussion, see Module V.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Interviewees who are questioned by child support workers generally are concerned with the issue of confidentiality. They want to know how their individual cases will be handled by the office. If the interviewee is applying for assistance at the Welfare agency, the worker should put the interviewee's mind at ease by stating that strict policies regarding confidentiality are adhered to and that such Federal regulations as 205.50 (b) safeguard many items, including the following:

- Name of applicants and recipients

- Amount of assistance provided

- Social and economic status of particular recipient or applicant

- Agency's evaluation of information concerning applicants and recipients.

The worker in the child support office often receives requests for information about clients. Defense attorneys, employers, relatives, and financial institutions often ask for specific data that is considered confidential information by the child support office. The worker should explain that any information contained in the case file which is not considered public record is not disclosed. At the same time, however, the interviewer should explain that any information revealed in court is public information and can be obtained by researching the dockets.

Guidelines for what is considered public record are stated in CFR 302.18. Anyone asking for information should be directed to research public records, and interviewees should be informed that this policy exists. Any information contained in the case file which is not public record is considered the property of the child support office and not available to the public. If this practice is followed on a consistent basis, the local community, too, will understand the child support office's procedures. Implementation of this process also will eliminate unnecessary telephone calls, correspondence, and office visits, and enable the child support office to be in compliance with Federal regulations. For further discussion, see Module V.

COOPERATION AND GOOD CAUSE

If the caretaker relative is eligible for an AFDC grant, he or she must be willing to sign an assignment of rights form, and to cooperate in giving information that is needed for establishment of paternity and/or a support order. Lack of cooperation may forfeit a public assistance grant unless good cause is established. Cooperation and good cause are specifically defined by Federal regulations and are addressed below:

Cooperation in obtaining support. The State plan according to 45CFR 232.12 must meet the following requirements:

- The plan shall provide that, as a condition of eligibility for assistance, each applicant for or recipient of AFDC will be required to cooperate (unless good cause for refusing to do so is determined to exist) with the State in:

  -- Identifying and locating the parent of a child for whom aid is claimed

  -- Establishing the paternity of a child born out of wedlock for whom aid is claimed

  -- Obtaining support payments for the applicant or recipient and for a child for whom aid is claimed

  -- Obtaining any other payments or property due the applicant or recipient or the child.

The Federal regulations concerning cooperation go on to say that these four objectives can be achieved by making it obligatory that an applicant appear as a witness at a hearing if necessary, keep appointments with the child support office as requested, provide information or attest to the lack of information under penalty of perjury, and pay to the child support agency any child support payments received from the absent parent after an assignment has been made. If the caretaker relative fails to cooperate as required, and good cause is not established, assistance will be denied to the caretaker relative without regard to other eligibility factors; and assistance will be provided to the eligible child in the form of protective payments.

These requirements place responsiblity on welfare recipients at the time an application is made. This is important since the caretaker relative (usually the mother) is the best source of information on the whereabouts of the absent parent.

Good cause. Good cause requirements according to 45CFR 232.40 exempt an applicant/recipient from cooperating in the location of the absent parent. Before the IV-D legislation was adopted, cooperation was required by all applicant/ recipients. It was recognized by Congress that a cooperation requirement that was inflexible would not be in the best interest of the children in some cases. Therefore, standards of "good cause" were based on consideration of the "best interests of the child."

The passage in 45 CFR 232.40 obligates the State to provide an opportunity to the applicant/recipient to claim good cause. To do this, the State must notify the applicant/recipient of the right to claim good cause and of all the requirements applicable to the good cause determination. The notice from the welfare agency to the applicant must be in writing and must advise him or her of the following:

- Potential benefits the children may derive from the establishment of paternity and securing support
- That cooperation is, by law, a condition of eligibility
- Sanctions for failure to cooperate
- Good cause requirements and exceptions
- That details of good cause will be provided on request of the applicant/recipient.

The welfare agency must determine whether good cause exists according to sections 232.40, 232.42, and 232.43. The determination must be in writing, contain the agency's findings and basis for determination, and be entered into the case record. Normally, the determination must be made in 45 days or less.

The only ground on which good cause can be determined for lack of cooperation is if such cooperation is reasonably anticipated to be against the best interest of the children. A few examples of cases in which good cause may be considered are: the absent parent has a history of frequently abusing the child physically, the child was conceived as a result of incest or forcible rape, or legal proceedings for adoption of the child are pending before a court.

It is important to note that the welfare agency must keep records and conduct periodic reviews of good cause cases to determine if they continue to be exceptions. If it is determined that circumstances have changed so that good cause no longer exists, it will rescind its findings and proceed to enforce cooperation requirements.

FOOTNOTES

/1/ Benjamin Lee Whorf, Language Thought, and Reality. Ed. John B. Carroll. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1956.

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MODULE I
SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

WHY SO MUCH IS BEYOND WORDS

by
Frank Trippett

WHY SO MUCH IS BEYOND WORDS*

"In the beginning," says the Gospel of St. John, "was the Word." The mystical meanings that the Bible lays upon the word Word are not embraced by everyone. Yet nobody can reasonably doubt that the coming of the word, if not the Word, to humankind was the start of something big is history. Human talk may have struck dyspeptic Nathaniel Hawthorne like "the croak and cackle of fowls," but the rise of language, written and spoken, is all but universally rated as one of the glories of the species. What is surprising is that in the common give and take of daily living people still rely so little upon the verbal language that distinguishes them from the beasts.

In fact, Homo sapiens, as a communicator, does not seem to have come all that far from the time when grunts and gesticulations were the main ways of getting messages across. Both individuals and groups still send vital messages by gesture, by pantomine, by dramatics, and by a dizzy diversity of what scholars call nonverbal communication. The reality is easy to overlook in an epoch that is bloated with pride in its dazzling technical marvels of communication. Yet, in spite of human garrulousness, perhaps as little as 20% of the communication among people is verbal, according to experts; most, by far, even when talk is going on, consists of nonverbal signals.

This is true of men, women, children, individually and in groups of all sizes. Nations and the realm of politics lean heavily on indirect gesture and charades to convey important messages. Take Secretary of State Alexander Haig's talks in China: Was not his actual purpose to send a signal to the Soviets? Societies signal prevalent values to their members by what is applauded and what condemned; status symbol is synonymous with status signal. "Language," said Samuel Johnson, "is the dress of thought." But all over the world people act as though language were mere costume--and usually a disguise. Everybody (evidently nobody can help it) tends to mimic that anonymous signaler cited in Proverbs: "He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers."

This tendency to commune by semaphore has probably not increased at all in centuries, but consciousness of it surely has. A spate of books like this season's Reading Faces and last decade's popular Body Language have explored the individual's tendency to broadcast things (unconsciously and otherwise) through all manner of physical movement and facial gymnastics. Such matters, made widely familiar by pop sociology, anthropology and psychology, have become the stuff of common conversation. Michael Korda's Power! How to Get It, How to Use It, like other books of this ilk, is mainly a primer in how to manipulate others by a cold-

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blooded control of nonverbal signals that occur commonly in the wordaday world: for example, how executives signal their style and presumptions of power by the clothes they choose and the way they arrange their office furniture.

At work or play, everybody emits wordless signals of infinite variety. Overt, like a warm smile. Spontaneous, like a raised eyebrow. Involuntary, like leaning away from a salesperson to resist a deal. Says Julius Fast in Body Language: "We rub our noses for puzzlement. We clasp our arms to isolate ourselves or to protect ourselves. We shrug our shoulders for indifference." Baseball pitchers often dust back a batter with a close ball that is not intended to hit but only to signal a warning claim of dominance. The twitchings of young children too long in adult company are merely involuntary signals of short-fused patience. Any competent psychiatrist remains alert to the tics and quirky expressions by which a patient's hidden emotions make themselves known. People even signal by the odors they give off, as Janet Hopson documents in superfluous detail in Scent Signals: The Silent Language of Sex. Actually, it is impossible for an individual to avoid signaling other people; the person who mutely withdraws from human intercourse sends out an unmistakable signal in the form of utter silence.

Sociologist Dane Archer calls reading such signals "social intelligence," but the phrase's greatest usefulness was probably in completing the title of his book How to Expand Your Social Intelligence Quotient. Urged Archer: "We must unshackle ourselves from the tendency to ignore silent behavior and to prefer words over everything else." The evidence all over is that while people meander the earth through thickets of verbiage (theirs and others), many, perhaps most, do pay more attention to wordless signals and are more likely to be influenced and governed by nonverbal messages.

Nothing but the daily news is necessary to show the reliance that rulers and nations place upon nonverbal communication. Presidents soon learn that they can hardly do anything that is not taken to be a signal of some sort to somebody. So it is too, with the governments under them. In March President Reagan, questioned about lifting the post-Afghanistan embargo on grain sales to the U.S.S.R., told reporters that he did not see how he could do it "without sending the wrong signal" --which is exactly what critics accused him of when he did kill the embargo the next month. Why did the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reject Ernest Lefever as the nation's top human rights official? Partly because of a fear that other countries might construe support of Lefever as a signal of national sympathy for his unenthusiastic attitude toward a strong American human rights policy. Why do some defense strategists support building the MX missile at a cost of about $40 billion? Not entirely because of its possible military efficacy, but also because of what a commitment to such a system might signal the Soviet Union about U.S. resolve.

The bloody history of the world ought to be the first item of evidence in any case against relying on wordless signaling in international affairs. The opportunities for misunderstanding are immense and constant. Says Harvard Law Professor Roger Fisher, a specialist in international negotiations: "The chances of properly understanding signals in the midst of conflict is always very slight." For instance, during the Iran hostage negotiations, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, intending to signal the belief that U.S.-Iran problems could be resolved, spoke of restoring "normal" diplomatic relations. Iran mistakenly took that to mean a return to things as they were under the despised Shah. Says Fisher: "Sending diplomatic signals is like sending smoke signals in a high wind."

As all but the very luckiest--or dullest--of people might testify, individual signals have a way of misfiring just as easily, with results just as calamitous if not as earthshaking. The danger of misunderstanding increases dramatically when even the most elementary signals are used by people in different cultures. The happiest overt American signals, the circled thumb and index finger, unless accompanied by a smile, amounts to an insult in France. The innocent American habit of propping a foot on a table or crossing a leg in figure-four style could cause hard feelings among Arabs, to whom the showing of a shoe sole is offensive.

People indulge in nonverbal communication not basically to be clever or devious but because these ways of communicating are deeply embedded in the habits of the species and automatically transmitted by all cultures. So says Anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell, a pioneer in the study of kinesics, as body language is called. Other experts point out that signaling by movement occurred among lizards and birds, as well as other creatures, even before mammals emerged.

Unfortunately, no useful dictionary of gestures is really possible, since every gesture and nonverbal expression depends for meaning on the variants of both the individual using it and the culture in which it takes place. Says Anthropologist Edward T. Hall, author of The Silent Language and Beyond Culture: "Because of its complexity, efforts to isolate out 'bits' of nonverbal communication and generalize from them in isolation are doomed to failure. Book titles such as How to Read a Person Like a Book are thoroughly misleading, doubly so because they are designed to satisfy the public's need for highly specific answers to complex questions for which there are no simple answers."

Sooner or later, for any word lover, the human habit of wordless signaling leads to a simple question for which there is perhaps only a complex answer. The question is why has language, given its unique power to convey thought or feeling or almost anything else in the human realm, fallen so short as a practical social

tool for man. The answer is that it has not. Instead, the human creature has fallen short as a user of language, employing it so duplicitously that even in ancient times the wise advised that people should be judged not by what they said but by what they did. That such advice holds good today goes, alas, without saying.

--by Frank Trippett--

SPEECH IS MORE THAN LANGUAGE

by
Peter Woolfson

SPEECH IS MORE THAN LANGUAGE*

Although language is man's primary means of communication, it is not, as is commonly supposed, man's only means of communicating. Language is, as Peter Woolfson suggests, only one part of a large network of communication systems which humans use to interact with each other. It is speech that facilitates communications among men and, while speech is usually associated only with language, it is actually composed of three communication systems. Woolfson discusses the interdependent nature of language, paralanguage, and kinesics in human communication.

When we think of communication among humans, we automatically think of language: the intricate system of sounds that differentiates between words that fit into a grammatical framework that makes sense. Yet human communication is multi-dimensional, occurring within the setting of human interaction and functioning within that complex blueprint of life's activities called culture. Culture, itself, can be considered "an interacting set of communications."/1/ It is made up of a network of communication systems in which humans interact and participate. We can see on an obvious level how all aspects of culture communicate when we walk into a doctor's office, a barbershop, a supermarket, a library, or a schoolroom. Each place has a special character that indicates its function immediately to the senses.

E.T. Hall in a classic work, The Silent Language /2/ effectively illustrates the concept of culture as communication, especially in terms of systems of time and space (proxemics). By examining the idea of lateness, Hall argues that there is an informal system of expectations, varying from culture to culture, that requires different responses. In America, significant units of lateness are: mumble-something periods (after five minutes); mild apology periods (after fifteen minutes); and full apology periods (after a half hour). By examining the concepts of space in different cultures, he argues that the distance between men in talking to one another and in behaving with each other provides significant information. For example, in America if a man approaches another man more closely than one arm-length--approximately two feet--the former becomes uneasy, because the violation of his territory could be interpreted as aggressiveness.

/1/George L. Trager, "Paralanguage: A First Approximation," in Language in Culture and Society, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 275.

/2/Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1959).

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Although all culture communicates, the communication complex designed to carry the weight of interaction and participation is speech. Speech is a complex network of three interdependent communication systems: language, paralanguage, and kinesics. Language is the central and apparently most highly developed of the three communication systems, yet in actual speech it is always accompanied by the other two. Paralanguage, the system of extra-linguistic noises, is often thought of as "tone of voice." Kinesics, the system of postures, facial expressions, and bodily motions, is thought of as "body language." The three systems make an interlocking and interpenetrating communication set.

Paralanguage, as a system, was developed principally by George Trager along lines analogous to those he established for the analysis of language. One of the difficulties of paralinguistic analysis is distinguishing between language sounds and paralinguistic noises. Language sounds fall into distinctive and contrastive classes called phonemes that identify and distinguish among the various grammatical units of the language. Paralinguistic noises, by definition, are excluded from these classes. They function in a complementary capacity--they accompany, interpenetrate, or even substitute for language, but they are not part of it.

There are apparently two main classes of paralinguistic noises: voice qualities and vocalizations. Voice qualities operate as background characteristics of a person's voice: his pitch range, his articulation control, his tempo, his rhythm. Much information is conveyed--usually without much conscious notice--by the voice qualities: an overhigh pitch can indicate nervous excitement; sloppy articulation can indicate a "high" on drugs or alcohol; a jerky rhythm can indicate insecurity. Vocalizations are classified into three groups: vocal characterizers, vocal qualifiers, and vocal segregates. Vocal characterizers, represent such phenomena as laughing, crying, groaning, moaning, giggling, whispering, yelling. They are useful, of course, for indicating attitude. If you say the sentence "John went to the bank" using each of the characterizers listed above, you will convey a different message each time. It is this level that is meant when someone says, "It was not what he said that bothered me, but the way that he said it!" Vocal qualifiers represent modifications of utterances in terms of intensity (loud or soft), pitch height (high or low), and extent (drawl or clipping). They, too, indicate attitude, but not overall attitude; rather they indicate attitudes to specific lexical items. If you say the phrase "Get out" with loudness, high pitch, and clipping, you will probably be demonstrating agitated anger; however, if you say it with softness, low pitch, and drawl, you will probably be demonstrating controlled, dangerous anger. Vocal segregates represent such phenomena as uh-uh, shh, tsk, and brr. Vocal segregates substitute for language; for example, you can express disgust or contempt by extending the tip of your tongue and trilling your lips--an excellent way to make a "Bronx cheer."

Kinesics, as a science, was developed by Ray Birdwhistell along the lines he found in linguistics. Thus, kines are parallel to phones, kinemes to phonemes, kinemorphs to morphs, and kinemorphemes to morphemes. Kinesic messages are expressed through a variety of gestures. Doubt, for example, can be expressed in a number of ways: scratching the scalp, biting the lip, knitting the brows, pulling the ear, pulling the nose, scratching the chin, and scratching the cheek. There are all kinds of movements which have message potentials from crossing your legs to curling your toes. The kinesicist has a relatively complex system of kinegraphs for describing body motion within each of eight basic sections of the body: the total head, the face, the neck, the trunk, the shoulder (including arm and wrist), the hand (including finger activity), the hip (including leg and ankle), and the foot.

Kinesic markers are particularly interesting gestures because, in addition to communicating in themselves, they also complement language. In their complementary function they usually reinforce the verbal message; occasionally, however, they contradict it. For example, consider a woman who says "But I love him" while shaking her head in a negative manner. Kinesic markers are of various types. There are pronominal markers where the hand is directed toward an object or event and accompanies a word like he, she, it, any, and some. There are pluralization markers indicated by a slight sweep of the hand or head accompanying a word like we, us, they, these, and our. There are verboid markers which involve movement of the body forward or backward accompanying reference to future or past time. There are area markers signaled by a movement of the body and accompanying words like on, over, under, by, through, and behind. And there are manner markers involving jerky or smooth motions which accompany words like slowly, smoothly, and quickly.

In summary, the act of speech requires a speaker and a hearer; both are members of society and participants in a culture. The communication interaction between them is very complex--they act according to the expectations of their social roles by a blueprint provided by their culture. They speak to each other not only in words, their language, but with space, gestures, facial expressions, and body movements; with extralinguistic noises, changes in pitch, loudness, and length; accompanied by giggling, laughing, crying, moaning, groaning, whispering, and yelling. Although we are not consciously aware of many of these activities, they are a necessary part of the communication act. Speech is more than language: it is a complex network of interpenetrating communication systems.

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MODULE II
PREPARING CHILD SUPPORT INTERVIEWS

MODULE II

PREPARING CHILD SUPPORT INTERVIEWS

Procedures used by child support interviewers are influenced by State and local program policies. For example, depending upon the policies of the jurisdiction, child support interviews may take place at several stages during a case's development. In any case, the objective of a particular interview is determined by when the contact occurs, who conducts the interview, and what will be done with the information being sought. There are basic principles of effective interviewing that can ensure more productive interview results. In this module, we will examine various preparatory principles and techniques that can lead to more efficient planning, information gathering, and questioning.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Because of the demands on child support interviewers, planning for interviews sometimes is viewed as a time-consuming and unnecessary luxury. This is an unfortunate misconception. The well-planned interview is consistently more successful and frequently less time-consuming than one which has not been planned. If the interviewer is well prepared, he or she will conduct the meeting with more self-confidence. There will be less anxiety on the parts of both parties, and less irrelevant discussion.

The planning process varies according to the nature of the case in question, the stage of case development at which interviewing occurs, and the interviewee's familiarity with program policies and procedures. There are several basic areas which should be considered when planning any child support enforcement interview:

- Reviewing case information
- Identifying the interview objectives
- Gathering additional information
- Selecting the interview strategy
- Determining questions to be asked
- Setting the stage.

Each of these areas will be discussed below. The child support interviewer will be provided suggestions for planning more successful interviews.

Reviewing case information. Since interviewing may occur at several different points in the process of establishing the child support obligation, the amount of documentaton available to the interviewer may differ accordingly. If an initial interview is being planned, the only documentation may be that provided by the referral form from the IV-A agency. However, if an interview is necessary for a case that already has been processed for paternity and support determinations, the interviewer may be presented with a file containing numerous documents that tell the history of the case. Regardless of the amount of information, a careful review should be part of the planning process.

If an initial interview is scheduled, the case review is likely to be a brief process. Any missing or conflicting information should be noted so that these areas can be addressed. If there have been previous meetings, the case review should include a check for discrepancies between information provided during previous contacts. It also is important for the interviewer to be as objective as possible, regardless of the familiarity with the case.

A case review should include not only reports from previous interviews, but also copies of orders, correspondence, and other forms as well. Most child support agencies use a case activity form or case action log which provides a chronological listing of all actions relating to any particular case. The pre-interview review always should include a thorough review of this document since it tells how the case has developed, what is needed next in the process, and what problems may affect the flow of the interview. (For a sample case activity sheet, see Module V.)

Identifying interview objectives. The child support interviewer conducts interviews with several categories of individuals: custodial relatives, absent parents, employers, and other collateral contacts. Some of these interviews are conducted face-to-face in an office setting; others are less formal, frequently taking place over the telephone.

One of the first steps in planning interviews is to identify what objectives are to be set for a particular meeting. Frequently, the objectives are multiple, including both the categories of information sharing and information gathering. If the interviewee has had little or no previous experience with the child support program, a portion of the time should be spent explaining the processes involved in establishing and enforcing support obligations or in determining and establishing paternity.

Once the objectives have been identified, the interview can set the tone for the entire case. Depending upon the individual to be interviewed, the purpose of the contact, and the nature of the case history, the interviewer may wish for the interview to be conducted in a manner that is very helping and supportive. On the other hand, if the purpose of the interview is to discuss

problems of non-compliance or delinquency, the desired approach may be much more formal and professional in tone. Skilled interviewers become adept at using tone to complement their other interviewing strategies. The following examples illustrate how case particulars determine interview objectives and tone.

- Custodial relative. If the custodial relative has had no previous experience with the child support program, the interviewer should make efforts to explain the procedures and benefits of the program. The interviewer should strive to establish rapport, in order to encourage cooperation and allay any feelings of intimidation.

- Absent parent or putative father. When interviewing this type of individual, the worker needs to explain how the program works, the benefits to the parent and child, the authority of program personnel, and the rights of all parties involved. By emphasizing the positive aspects of the program, the absent parent or putative father may be less resistant.

- Delinquent responsible person. When addressing the matter of delinquency or non-compliance, the interviewer should make every effort to encourage compliance. If the interviewee resists the notion of voluntary compliance, the interviewer should adjust his or her tone, and emphasize forcefully the consequences and alternatives of non-compliance.

- Collateral contacts. It frequently is necessary to contact, either by telephone or in person, individuals who are believed to have information required for processing cases. Although the objective of these contacts is to obtain the needed information, the worker also should be attempting to establish good public relations and a positive image for the program. This is particularly important when dealing with employers and other public agencies. A positive impression contributes to relations that can be very beneficial if subsequent contacts are required for other cases.

Gathering additional information. The gathering of information for a child support case file is a continuous process that begins with the referral or intake forms which open the case. Information is obtained from numerous sources and in various forms, depending upon the nature of a specific case. In most programs, the child support worker who conducts interviews also is responsible for accumulating documentation and evidence that may be required to determine exactly what information will be needed and how it should be secured.

After reviewing information contained in a case record, the interviewer may discover that information is needed which should be obtained prior to the interview. This missing information can be identified through a thorough review during the planning stage and then can be sought from the appropriate source. If documents or other information are available from the interviewee, the interviewer can request that desired information be provided when the interview takes place. Such preplanning eliminates time that is wasted because interviews have to be rescheduled after new evidence has been received. Although it is impossible to anticipate exactly what will be needed until after the interview has begun, involving the interviewee in the information gathering can be time saving. This process also places part of the responsibility on the individual who is receiving benefit from the program.

It also is a good policy to begin gathering data that may not be needed immediately, but could be required at a later time. Cases that ultimately require legal remedies for enforcement may be delayed in processing because of needed documentation which must be located. Interviewers, regardless of what point in the process they represent, always should be helping to develop cases that are complete and capable of being worked without unnecessary delays.

Selecting the interview strategy: directive and non-directive interviews. In the field of child support, interviewers operate under time and caseload constraints. Preparing a plan for the interview makes it possible to focus on the information required for the specific case and to achieve desired results in minimum time.

If the interviewer can learn in advance something about the interviewee--educational level, attitude, motivation, situation--he or she can strategize more effectively. Potential barriers need to be determined so attempts can be made to reduce these roadblocks to productive communication. Based on the particulars of the case and of the person to be interviewed, a decision may be made as to whether to use a directive or non-directive interview strategy.

In a directive interview, the interviewer determines how the contact will be handled. The situation is highly structured and tightly controlled. If the objective is to either impart or gather considerable amounts of information, this approach can be very effective. However this strategy also can present problems. For example, if an interviewer is overly structured, he or she may overlook cues for additional information. Also because the interviewer tends to be rather rigid, there is a reduced chance for establishing rapport.

In a non-directive interview, the interviewee is encouraged to talk freely. This tactic encourages interviewees to analyze a variety of topics relating to the case in question. The interviewer has more flexibility in this approach than he or she does in a

directive interview. However, while there is a greater likelihood for establishing better relationships between the two parties, there also is an increased risk of disorganization in the case. Non-directive interviews usually are time consuming and may have reduced applicability.

Determining questions to be asked. Questioning should be tailored to the specific child support case. The same inquiry is not required in every case; however, there are certain basic facts which nearly always need to be recorded. Because of these commonly required questions, most agencies have developed questionnaires to expedite the interviewing process. Sometimes these forms are mailed to the interviewee so that they can be completed and returned to the office at the time of the scheduled appointment. Although this practice saves time, it inhibits spontaneity and increases the opportunity for deception.

Questionnaires must be used very carefully, whether they are completed in the child support office or elsewhere. They are valuable as guides or checklists, but should not be mistakenly viewed as the all-inclusive listing of potentially necessary information. Child support interviewers must guard against a routine approach to questioning by viewing each case individually and determining the questions which are appropriate for the specific situation. Most effective interviews are conducted by using a combination of predetermined questions and additional ones that result from information which emerges during the interview.

Determining questions to be asked is an integral part of interview planning and prevents wasted time. However, it is important, that the interview not become so structured that the interviewer is not responsive to the interviewee.

Taking notes during the interview. While it is extremely important for the child support interviewer to keep an accurate record of what transpires during the interview, it is equally important that the interviewer not impede communication by excessive or inappropriate note-taking. Many workers use abbreviations or some form of speedwriting to capture the most important information that emerges during the questioning process. These notes also may include the worker's impressions or reactions to the responses, attitudes, or nonverbal communication of the interviewee. Although these notes can be helpful to planning subsequent interviews, they should not be confused with the kinds of information that are appropriately included as part of the case file. Entries in the file should be confined to a recording of what actually takes place during the interview and should not include comments that reflect individual interpretation or judgment.

Polices that can enhance the effectiveness of interview while note-taking include the following:

- Maintain eye contact as much as possible
- Avoid opening gaps in the flow of conversation
- Use abbreviations or a method of shorthand to speed note-taking
- Do not create interruptions in the conversation by stopping to make extensive notes
- Take notes consistently throughout the interview so writing does not indicate a reaction to a particular answer
- Review and expand on notes as soon as possible after the interview has been terminated.

The interviewer's notes provide a handy reference for reviewing the information that has been provided. This process affords an opportunity for misunderstandings to be resolved, misconceptions to be clarified, and additional information to be gathered. This review reinforces the seriousness and importance of what has been discussed, and when the interviewee realizes that the child support office maintains a record of information provided, there is a reduced tendency to give false information.

To stress the importance of truthful replies, many child support offices require interviewees to take an oath before the questioning begins. This process is particularly useful if relevant information has been revealed which might be important during adjudication. In addition, the interview results may be typed, signed, and notarized. This supplies a valuable item of evidence and serves to prevent conflicting testimony at a later time.

Setting the stage: physical setting and physical proximity. As we discuss in Module I, nonverbal signals play an important role in communication. For example, the space in which an interview takes place can influence the interviewee's attitude and responsiveness. Many child support workers have minimal control over their work space; however, there are ways for each person to see that their office is as conducive as possible to productive interviews.

Interviews take place under many different conditions. It is advisable, whenever possible, for the setting to be a room which affords privacy, is not overwhelming or noisy, and generally allows uninhibited conversation to take place.

Since the issues discussed during a child support interview usually are very personal, privacy becomes a major factor to be considered. If private offices are not available, the interviewer should consider ways of creating an atmosphere of privacy. For

example, if several workers share a larger office space, the interviewee can be positioned with these individuals out of view. Such an arrangement gives the impression of intimacy and confidentiality where little actually exists. Two major factors that affect the interview process are physical setting and physical proximity.

The physical setting and physical proximity of the interviewer's work space contributes to the mood set for the meeting. The arrangement of furniture, and of chairs specifically, influences the feeling the client may have about the interview experience. In addition, a cluttered, messy office can give the impression of disorganization and inefficiency. Conversely, desks and offices which are clinically neat and orderly may appear cold, make the interviewee feel unwelcome or uncomfortable, and project an image of very little productivity.

The key to effective office decor is that it is appropriate, professional, and comfortable for both parties in the interview. Since so much time is spent in offices, many workers like to display personal items that reflect their tastes and interests. If tastefully done, this approach to decorating an office can contribute to a relaxed atmosphere. However, if overdone, the result may be that the office does not appear to be a place in which serious business is transacted. A checklist is included at the end of this module to help the interviewer evaluate the appropriateness of the interview environment. (See Figure II-1.)

In Module I, we briefly discuss the influences of culture on people's reactions to physical proximity. In western cultures, generally, and in the American culture, particularly, people expect strangers to keep their distance. For example, researchers have expounded on the anxiety that is created by overcrowding on subways in New York City. There are three actions that cause an individual to feel that his or her space has been violated: moving close to him or her, staring, and touching.

When an individual perceives that his or her space has been violated, he or she will feel threatened. Obviously, feelings like this create barriers to effective communication. Consequently, in an interview situation, the interviewer should avoid generating these feelings in an interviewee. However, as previously mentioned, there are ways to manipulate the individual's sense of personal space to make him or her more responsive. These techniques require a good deal of judgment, since they walk the fine line between closeness and oppression. The article, "Space Speaks," which is included in this handbook provides more information on the issue of personal space and its influences.

For example, during the child support enforcement interview, some interviewers sit fairly close to the interviewee with no furniture, or as little as possible, separating the two individuals. This setting makes it more likely that the interviewee and the interviewer will focus full attention on each other and the matter at hand.

However, the interviewer who chooses this arrangement should be on the alert for non-verbal indications that he or she is threatening the interviewee with his or her proximity.

Other interviewers feel more comfortable and feel the interviews they conduct are more successful if the two parties are seated facing each other across the interviewer's desk. If this arrangement is selected, the interviewer can project an attitude of accessibility by doing such things as leaning forward to listen to the interviewee. It is extremely important that both the person conducting the interview and the individual being interviewed be comfortable with the interview environment. Diagrams of alternative seating arrangements can be found at the end of this module. (See Figure II-2.)

There are numerous barriers to successful interviewing that are external in nature. Nevertheless, they negatively affect the interview. For example, the child support worker knows all too well the realities of the heavy case load and how the lack of time can affect his or her person handling of individual cases. He or she also knows that most child support offices are full of such distractions with sterile furniture, unappealing surroundings, busy telephones, and less than adequate restrooms.

Because these external barriers do exert a negative influence on the quality of the interview, the interviewer may want to consider some of the following strategies for dealing with them:

- Certain areas of the work space may be pinpointed as interviewing areas and can be furnished and decorated appropriately.

- If possible, arrangements can be made to provide care for children who come with their parents. This procedure frees the parents to participate fully in the interview process.

- The interviewer may walk to the reception area to greet interviewees or may have them escorted to the interview room. This strategy also indicates friendliness and receptivity.

- Perhaps with the cooperation of the other workers, the worker may help initiate a system where the worker is not interrupted by telephone calls during the interview process. This policy will enhance the interviewee's sense of privacy and the interviewer's ability to concentrate.

- Mark restrooms clearly so that parents and children may have ready access to them.

FOOTNOTE

/1/ Portions of this module are based on two training manuals. One, Interviewing Skillls for IV-D Personnel, was developed under contract for the New York State Dept. of Social Services. The second, Paternity Establishment, was developed by the National Institute for Child Support Enforcement, under contract to the Office of Child Support Enforcement

FIGURE II-1: CHECKLIST FOR OFFICE APPEARANCE

The following checklist can help you determine if your office or work place creates an environment conducive to effective interviewing. If you must answer yes to any of the following questions, there are probably improvements you could make:

1. Does your office or desk usually look cluttered and disorganized?

2. Is there an appearance which is so clinically neat that it seems impersonal?

3. Are there so many personal items on display that your office does not look like a place in which important business takes place?

4. Do you have comic posters or pictures which might indicate you do not take your work seriously?

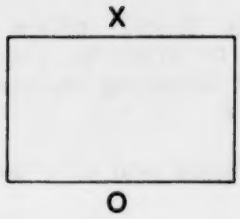
5. Are there distractions in the interviewee's line of vision such as wall decorations?

6. Is the interviewee's chair positioned so that his or her attention is directed to you?

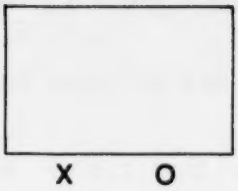
7. If your desk is in a room with other workers, is the furniture arranged in such a way that maximum privacy is provided?

8. Is your desk situated so that passers-by are inclined to stop for nonproductive chats?

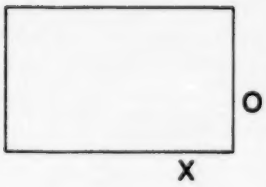
FIGURE II-2: ARRANGEMENT ALTERNATIVES



This is the most commonly used arrangement and has the advantage of reinforcing the authority of the child support interviewer. It is least conducive to establishing rapport and setting the interviewee at ease.



This arrangement places the two individuals on a more even position. It allows the interviewee to observe notes being taken and is conducive to a relaxed and non-threatening atmosphere. There is a reduced element of authority which can be detrimental.



This seating arrangement is a compromise between the two shown above. It reduces the distance between the two parties, but maintains separation which allows the interviewer to be very flexible with the increase or decrease of authoritative postures.

X — Interviewer
O — Interviewee

MODULE II
SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

SPACE SPEAKS

by
Edward T. Hall

SPACE SPEAKS*

When we observe a man and a woman whispering to each other, we should realize that they are also communicating something to us. That is, we should recognize that there is a certain degree of intimacy between them because they are close together. We have not in the past considered this kind of information to be communication, nor, until recently, have we attempted to study how space speaks to us. In this chapter from his book The Silent Language, Edward T. Hall examines the subject of proxemics and its principles, the concept of territoriality, how Americans view space in a personal and equalitarian manner, and how cultures vary in their use of space.

Every living thing has a physical boundary that separates it from its external environment. Beginning with the bacteria and the simple cell and ending with man, every organism has a detectable limit which marks where it begins and ends. A short distance up the phylogenetic scale, however, another, non-physical boundary appears that exists outside the physical one. This new boundary is harder to delimit than the first but is just as real. We call this the "organism's territory." The act of laying claim to and defending a territory is termed territoriality. It is territoriality with which this chapter is most concerned. In man, it becomes highly elaborated, as well as being very greatly differentiated from culture to culture.

Anyone who has had experience with dogs, particularly in a rural setting such as on ranches and farms, is familiar with the way in which the dog handles space. In the first place, the dog knows the limits of his master's "yard" and will defend it against encroachment. There are also certain places where he sleeps: a spot next to the fireplace, a spot in the kitchen, or one in the dining room if he is allowed there. In short, a dog has fixed points to which he returns time after time depending upon the occasion. One can also observe that dogs create zones around them. Depending upon his relationship to the dog and the zone he is in, a trespasser can evoke different behavior when he crosses the invisible lines which are meaningful to the dog.

This is particularly noticeable in females with puppies. A mother who has a new litter in a little-used barn will claim the barn as her territory. When the door opens she may make a slight movement or stirring in one corner. Nothing else may happen as the intruder moves ten or fifteen feet into the barn. Then the dog may raise her head or get up, circle about, and lie down as another invisible boundary is crossed. One can tell about where the line is by withdrawing and watching when her head goes down. As additional lines are crossed, there will be other signals, a thumping of the tail, a low moan or a growl.

*"Space Speaks," Chapter 10, from The Silent Language by Edward T. Hall. Copyright 1959 by Edward T. Hall. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc. and the author.

One can observe comparable behavior in other vertebrates--fish, birds, and mammals. Birds have well-developed territoriality, areas which they defend as their own and which they return to year after year. To those who have seen a robin come back to the same nest each year this will come as no surprise. Seals, dolphin, and whales are known to use the same breeding grounds. Individual seals have been known to come back to the same rock year after year.

Man has developed his territoriality to an almost unbelievable extent. Yet we treat space somewhat as we treat sex. It is there but we don't talk about it. And if we do, we certainly are not expected to get technical or serious about it. The man of the house is always somewhat apologetic about "his chair." How many people have had the experience of coming into a room, seeing a big comfortable chair and heading for it, only to pull themselves up short, or pause and turn to the man and say, "Oh, was I about to sit in your chair?" The reply, of course, is usually polite. Imagine the effect if the host were to give vent to his true feelings and say, "Hell, yes, you're sitting in my chair, and I don't like anybody sitting in my chair!" For some unknown reason, our culture has tended to play down or cause us to repress and dissociate the feelings we have about space. We relegate it to the informal and are likely to feel guilty whenever we find ourselves getting angry because someone has taken our place.

Territoriality is established so rapidly that even the second session in a series of lectures is sufficient to find a significant proportion of most audiences back in the same seats. What's more, if one has been sitting in a particular seat and someone else occupies it, one can notice a fleeting irritation. There is a remnant of an old urge to throw out the interloper. The interloper knows this too, because he will turn around and look up and say, "Have I got your seat?" at which point you lie and say, "Oh no, I was going to move anyway."

Once while talking on this subject to a group of Americans who were going overseas, one very nice, exceedingly mild-mannered woman raised her hand and said, "You mean it's natural for me to feel irritated when another woman takes over my kitchen?" Answer: "Not only is it natural, but most American women have very strong feelings about their kitchens. Even a mother can't come in and wash the dishes in her daughter's kitchen without annoying her. The kitchen is the place where 'who will dominate' is settled. All women know this, and some can even talk about it. Daughters who can't keep control of their kitchen will be forever under the thumb of any woman who can move into this area."

The questioner continued: "You know that makes me feel so relieved. I have three older sisters and a mother, and every time they come to town they march right into the kitchen and take over. I want to tell them to stay out of my kitchen, that they have their own kitchens and this is my kitchen, but I always thought I was having unkind thoughts about my mother and sisters, thoughts I wasn't supposed to have. This relieves me so much, because now I know I was right."

Father's shop is, of course, another sacred territory and best kept that way. The same applies to his study, if he has one.

As one travels abroad and examines the ways in which space is handled, startling variations are discovered--differences which we react to vigorously. Since none of us is taught to look at space as isolated from other associations, feelings cued by the handling of space are often attributed to something else. In growing up people learn literally thousands of spatial cues, all of which have their own meaning in their own context. These cues "release" responses already established in much the same way as Pavlov's bells started his dogs salivating. Just how accurate a spatial memory is has never been completely tested. There are indications, however, that it is exceedingly persistent.

Literally thousands of experiences teach us unconsciously that space communicates. Yet this fact would probably have never been brought to the level of consciousness if it had not been realized that space is organized differently in each culture. The associations and feelings that are released in a member of one culture almost invariably mean something else in the next. When we say that some foreigners are "pushy," all this means is their handling of space releases this association in our minds.

What gets overlooked is that the response is there in toto and has been there all along. There is no point in well-meaning people feeling guilty because they get angry when a foreigner presents them with a spatial cue that releases anger or aggression. The main thing is to know what is happening and try to find out which cue was responsible. The next step is to discover, if possible, whether the person really intended to release this particular feeling or whether he intended to engender a different reaction.

Uncovering the specific cues in a foreign culture is a painstaking and laborious process. Usually it is easier for the newcomer to listen to the observations of old-timers and then test these observations against his own experience. At first he may hear, "You're going to have a hard time getting used to the way these people crowd you. Why, when you are trying to buy a theater ticket, instead of standing in line and waiting their turn they all try to reach in and get their money to the ticket seller at once. It's just terrible the way you have to push and shove just to keep your place. Why, the last time I got to the ticket window of the theater and poked my head up to the opening, there were five arms and hands reaching over my shoulder waving money." Or he may hear the following: "It's as much as your life is worth to ride the streetcars. They're worse than our subways. What's more, these people don't seem to mind it at all." Some of this stems from the fact that, as Americans we have a pattern which discourages touching, except in moments of intimacy. When we ride on a streetcar or crowded elevator we will "hold ourselves in," having been taught from early childhood to avoid bodily contact with strangers. Abroad, it's confusing when conflicting feelings are being released at the same time. Our senses are bombarded by a strange language, different smells, and gestures, as well as a host of signs and symbols.

However, the fact that those who have been in a foreign country for some time talk about these things provides the newcomer with advance warning. Getting over a spatial accent is just as important, sometimes more so, than eliminating a spoken one. Advice to the newcomer might be: Watch where people stand, and don't back up. You will feel funny doing it, but it's amazing how much difference it makes in people's attitudes toward you.

HOW DIFFERENT CULTURES USE SPACE

Several years ago a magazine published a map of the United States as the average New Yorker sees it. The details of New York were quite clear and the suburbs to the north were also accurately shown. Hollywood appeared in some detail while the space in between New York and Hollywood was almost a total blank. Places like Phoenix, Albuquerque, the Grand Canyon, and Taos, New Mexico, were all crowded into a hopeless jumble. It was easy to see that the average New Yorker knew little and cared less for what went on in the rest of the country. To the geographer the map was a distortion of the worst kind. Yet to the student of culture it was surprisingly accurate. It showed the informal images that many people have of the rest of the country.

As a graduate student I lived in New York, and my landlord was a first-generation American of European extraction who had lived in New York all his life. At the end of the academic year as I was leaving, the landlord came down to watch me load my car. When I said goodby, he remarked, "Well, one of these Sunday afternoons I put my family in the car and we drive out to New Mexico to see you."

The map and the landlord's comment illustrate how Americans treat space as highly personalized. We visualize the relationship between places we know by personal experience. Places which we haven't been to and with which we are not personally identified tend to remain confused.

Traditionally American space begins with "a place." It is one of the oldest sets, comparable to, but not quite the same as, the Spanish lugar. The reader will have no difficulty thinking up ways in which place is used: "He found a place in her heart," "He has a place in the mountains," "I am tired of this place," and so on. Those who have children know how difficult it is to get across to them the whole concept of place--like Washington, or Boston, or Philadelphia, and so on. An American child requires between six and seven years before he has begun to master the basic concepts of place. Our culture provides for a great variety of places, including different classes of places.

Contrasted with the Middle East, our system is characterized by fine gradations as one moves from one space category to the next. In the world of the Arab there are villages and cities. That is about all. Most non-nomadic Arabs think of themselves as villagers. The actual villages are of varying population, from a few families up to several thousands.

The smallest place category in the United States is not covered by a term like hamlet, village or town. It is immediately recognizable as a territorial entity, nevertheless, because such places are always named. They are areas with no recognizable center where a number of families live--like Dogpatch of the funny papers.

Our Dogpatches present the basic American pattern in uncomplicated form. They have scattered residences with no concentration of buildings in one spot. Like time, place with us is diffused, so that you never quite know where its center is. Beyond this the naming of place categories begins with the "crossroads store" or "corner" and continues with the "small shopping center," the "county seat," the "small town," "large town," "metropolitan center," "city" and "metropolis." Like much of the rest of our culture, including the social ranking system, there are no clear gradations as one moves from one category to the next. The "points" are of varying sizes, and there are no linguistic cues indicating the size of the place we are talking about. The United States, New Mexico, Albuquerque, Pecos, are all said the same way and used the same way in sentences. The child who is learning the language has no way of distinguishing one space category from another by listening to others talk.

The miracle is that children eventually are able to sort out and pin down the different space terms from the meager cues provided by others. Try telling a five-year-old the difference between where you live in the suburbs and the town where your wife goes to shop. It will be a frustrating task, since the child, at that age, only comprehends where he lives. His room, his house, his place at the table are the places that are learned early.

The reason most Americans have difficulty in school with geography or geometry stems from the fact that space as an informal cultural system is different from space as it is technically elaborated by classroom geography and mathematics. It must be said in fairness to ourselves that other cultures have similar problems. Only the very perceptive adult realizes that there is anything really difficult for the child to learn about space. In reality, he has to take what is literally a spatial blur and isolate the significant points that adults talk about. Sometimes adults are unnecessarily impatient with children because they don't catch on. People do not realize that the child has heard older people talking about different places and is trying to figure out, from what he hears, the difference between this place and that. In this regard it should be pointed out that the first clues which suggest to children that one thing is different from another come from shifts in tone of voice which direct attention in very subtle but important ways. Speaking a fully developed language as we do, it is hard to remember that there was a time when we could not speak at all and when the whole communicative process was carried on by means of variations in the voice tone. This early language is lost to consciousness and functions out of awareness, so that we tend to forget the very great role it plays in the learning process.

To continue our analysis of the way a child learns about space, let us turn to his conception of a road. At first a road is whatever he happens to be driving on. This doesn't mean that he can't tell when you take a wrong turn. He can, and often will even correct a mistake which is made. It only means that he has not yet broken the road down into its components and that he makes the distinction between this road and that road in just the same way that he learns to distinguish between the phoneme d and the phoneme b in initial position in the spoken language.

Using road for cross-cultural contrast, the reader will recall that Paris, being an old city as well as a French city, has a street-naming system that puzzles most Americans. Street names shift as one progresses. Take Rue St.-Honore, for example, which becomes Rue du Faubourg St.-Honore, Avenue des Ternes, and Avenue du Roule. A child growing up in Paris, however, has no more difficulty learning his system than one of our children learning ours. We teach ours to watch the intersections and the directions and that when something happens--that is, when there is a change of course at one of these points--you can expect the name to change. In Paris the child learns that as he passes certain landmarks--like buildings that are well known, or statues--the name of the street changes.

It is interesting and informative to watch very young children as they learn their culture. They quickly pick up the fact that we have names for some things and not for others. First, they identify the whole object or the set--a room, for instance; then they begin to fixate on certain other discrete objects like books, ashtrays, letter openers, tables, and pencils. By so doing they accomplish two things. First, they find out how far down the scale they have to go in identifying things. Second, they learn what are the isolates and patterns for handling space and object nomenclature. First children are often better subjects than second children, because having learned the hard way, the first one will teach the second one without involving the parents.

The child will ask, "What's this?" pointing to a pencil. You reply, "A pencil," The child is not satisfied and says, "No, this," pointing to the shaft of the pencil and making clear that she meant the shaft. So you say, "Oh, that's the shaft of the pencil." Then the child moves her finger one quarter inch and says, "What's this?" and you say, "The shaft." This process is repeated and you say, "That's still the shaft; and this is the shaft, and this is the shaft. It's all the shaft of the pencil. This is the shaft, this is the point, and this is the eraser, and this is the little tin thing that holds the eraser on." Then she may point to the eraser, and you discover that she is still trying to find out where the dividing lines are. She manages to worm out the fact that the eraser has a top and sides but no more. She also learns that there is no way to tell the difference between one side and the next and that no labels are pinned on parts of the point, even though distinctions are made between the lead and the rest of the

pencil. She may glean from this that materials make a difference some of the time and some of the time they do not. Areas where things begin and end are apt to be important, while the points in between are often ignored.

The significance of all this would undoubtedly have escaped me if it hadn't been for an experience on the atoll of Truk. In a rather detailed series of studies of technology I had progressed to the point of having to obtain the nomenclature of the canoe and the wooden food bowl. At this point it was necessary for me to go through what children go through--that is, point to various parts after I thought I had the pattern and ask if I had the name right. As I soon discovered, their system of carving up micro-space was radically different from our own. The Trukese treat open spaces, without dividing lines (as we know them), as completely distinct. Each area has a name. On the other hand, they have not developed a nomenclature for the edges of objects as elaborately as Westerners have done. The reader has only to think of rims and cups and the number of different ways in which these can be referred to. There is the rim itself. It can be square or round or elliptical in cross section; straight, flared, or curved inward; plain or decorated, and wavy or straight. This doesn't mean that the Trukese don't elaborate rims. They do; it just means that we have ways of talking about what we do and not as many ways of talking about what happens to an open area as they do. The Trukese separate parts which we think of as being "built in" to the object.

A certain decoration or carving at either end of a canoe-shaped food bowl is thought of as being separate or distinct from the rim in which it has been carved. It has an essence of its own. Along the keel of the canoe the carving, call the chunefatch, has characteristics with which it endows the canoe. The canoe is one thing, the chunefatch something else. Open spaces without obvious markers on the side of the bowl have names. Such distinctions in the dividing up of space make the settling of land claims unbelieveably complicated in these islands. Trees, for instance, are considered separate from the soil out of which they grow. One man may own the trees, another the soil below.

Benjamin Whorf, describing how Hopi concepts of space are reflected in the language, mentions the absence of terms for interior three-dimensional spaces, such as words for room, chamber, hall, passage, interior, cell, crypt, cellar, attic, loft and vault. This does not alter the fact that the Hopi have multi-room dwellings and even use the room for special purposes such as storage, grinding corn, and the like.

Whorf also notes that fact that it is impossible for the Hopi to add a possessive pronoun to the word for room and that in the Hopi scheme of things a room in the strict sense of the word is not a noun and does not act like a noun.

Since there is a wealth of data on how strongly the Hopi feel about holding onto things which are theirs, one has to rule out the possessive factor in Whorf's references to their inability to say "my room." It's just that their language is different. One might be lead to assume by this that the Hopi would then lack a sense of territoriality. Again, nothing could be farther from the truth. They just use and conceive of space differently. We work from points and along lines. They apparently do not. While seemingly inconsequential, these differences caused innumberable headaches to the white supervisors who used to run the Hopi reservation in the first part of this century.

I will never forget driving over to one of the villages at the end of a mesa and discovering that someone was building a house in the middle of the road. It later developed that the culprit (in my eyes) was a man I had known for some time. I said, "Paul, why are you building your house in the middle of the road? There are lots of good places on either side of the road. This way people have to knock the bottoms out of their cars driving around on the rocks to get to the village." His reply was short and to the point: "I know, but it's my right." He did have a right to a certain area laid down long before there was a road. The fact that the road had been used for many years meant nothing to him. Use and disuse of space in our terms had nothing to do with his ideas of possession.

SPACE AS A FACTOR IN CULTURE CONTACT

Whenever an American moves overseas, he suffers from a condition known as "culture shock." Culture shock is simply a removal or distortion of many of the familiar cues one encounters at home and the substitution for them of other cues which are strange. A good deal of what occurs in the organization and use of space provides important leads as to the specific cues responsible for culture shock.

The Latin house is often built around a patio that is next to the sidewalk but hidden from outsiders behind a wall. It is not easy to describe the degree to which small architectural differences such as this affect outsiders. American Point Four technicians living in Latin America used to complain that they felt "left out" of things, that they were "shut off." Others kept wondering what was going on "behind those walls." In the United States, on the other hand, propinquity is the basis of a good many relationships. To us the neighbor is actually quite close. Being a neighbor endows one with certain rights and privileges, also responsibilities. You can borrow things, including food and drink, but you also have to take your neighbor to the hospital in an emergency. In this regard he has almost as much claim on you as a cousin. For these and other reasons the American tries to pick his neighborhood carefully, because he knows that he is going to be thrown into intimate contact with people. We do not understand why it is that when we live next to people abroad the sharing of adjacent space does not always conform to our pattern. In France and

England, for instance, the relations between neighbors are apt to be cooler that in the United States. Mere propinquity does not tie people together. In England neighbor children do not play as they do in our neighborhoods. When they do play, arrangements are sometimes made a month in advance as though they were coming from the other side of town!

Another example has to do with the arrangement of offices. In this case one notices great contrast between ourselves and the French. Part of our over-all pattern in the United States is to take a given amount of space and divide it up equally. When a new person is added in an office, almost everyone will move his desk so that the newcomer will have his share of the space. This may mean moving from positions that have been occupied for a long time and away from favorite views from the window. The point is that the office force will make its own adjustments voluntarily. In fact, it is a signal that they have acknowledged the presence of the new person when they start rearranging the furniture. Until this has happened, the boss can be sure that the new person has not been integrated into the group.

Given a large enough room, Americans will distribute themselves around the walls, leaving the center open for group activities such as conferences. That is, the center belongs to the group and is often marked off by a table or some object placed there both to use and save the space. Lacking a conference table, members will move their chairs away from their desks to form a "huddle" in the middle. The pattern of moving from one's place to huddle is symbolized in our language by such expressions as, "I had to take a new position on that point," or "The position of the office on this point is . . ."

The French, by contrast, do not make way for each other in the unspoken, taken-for granted way that we do. They do not divide up the space with a new colleague. Instead they may grudgingly give him a small desk in a dark corner looking toward the wall. This action speaks eloquently to Americans who have found themselves working for the French. We feel that not to "make a place" accents status differences. If the rearrangement which says, "Now we admit you to the group, and you are going to stay," fails to take place, Americans are likely to feel perilously insecure. In French offices the key figure is the man in the middle, who has his fingers on everything so that all runs smoothly. There is a centralized control. The French educational system runs from the middle, so that all students all over France take the same class at the same time.

It has already been mentioned that ordering is an important element in American patterns. As a general rule, whenever services are involved we feel that people should queue up in order of arrival. This reflects the basic equalitarianism of our culture. In cultures where a class system or its remnants exist, such ordinality may not exist. That is, where society assigns rank for certain purposes, or wherever ranking is involved, the handling of space will reflect this.

To us it is regarded as a democratic virtue for people to be served without reference to the rank they hold in their occupational group. The rich and poor alike are accorded equal opportunity to buy and be waited upon in the order of arrival. In a line at a theater Mrs. Gotrocks is no better than anyone else. However, apart from the English, whose queueing patterns we share, many Europeans are likely to look upon standing in line as a violation of their individuality. I am reminded of a Pole who reacted this way. He characterized Americans as sheep, and the mere thought of such passiveness was likely to set him off crashing into a line at whatever point he pleased. Such people can't stand the idea of being held down by a group conformity as if they were an automaton. Americans watching the Pole thought he was "pushy." He didn't bother to hide the fact that he thought we were much too subdued. He used to say, "What does it matter if there is a little confusion and some people get served before others?"

FORMAL SPACE PATTERNS

Depending upon the culture in question, the formal patterning of space can take on varying degrees of importance and complexity. In America, for example, no one direction takes precedence over another except in a technical or utilitarian sense. In other cultures one quickly discovers that some directions are sacred or preferred. Navajo doors must face east, the mosques of the Moslems must be oriented toward Mecca, the sacred rivers of India flow south. Americans pay attention to direction in a technical sense, but formally and informally they have no preference. Since our space is largely laid out by technical people, houses, towns, and main arteries are usually oriented according to one of the points of the compass. The same applies to roads and main highways when the topography allows, as it does in the flat expanses of Indiana and Kansas. This technical patterning allows us to locate places by co-ordinates (a point on the line). "He lives at 1321 K Street, N.W." tells us that he lives in the northwest part of town in the thirteenth block west of the line dividing the town into east-west halves and eleven blocks north of the line dividing the town into north-south halves, on the left side of the street, about one quarter of the way up the block.

In the country we will say, "Go out of town ten miles west on Highway 66 until you get to the first paved road turning north. Turn right on that road and go seven miles. It's the second farm on your left. You can't miss it."

Our concept of spaces makes use of the edges of things. If there aren't any edges, we make them by creating artificial lines (five miles west and two miles north). Space is treated in terms of a co-ordinate system. In contrast, the Japanese and many other people work within areas. They name "spaces" and distinguish between one space and the next or parts of a space. To us a space is empty--one gets into it by intersecting it with lines.

A technical pattern which may have grown out of an informal base is that of positional value or ranking. We have canonized the idea of the positional value in almost every aspect of our lives, so much that even children four years old are fully aware of its implications and are apt to fight with each other as to who will be first.

In addition to positional value, the American pattern emphasizes equality and standardization of the segments which are used for measuring space or into which space is divided, be it a ruler or a suburban subdivision. We like our components to be standard and equal. American city blocks tend to have uniform dimensions whereas towns in many other parts of the world are laid out with unequal blocks. This suggests that it was no accident that mass production, made possible by the standardization of parts, had its origins in the United States. There are those who would argue that there are compelling technological reasons for both mass production and parts standardization. However, an examination of actual practices indicates that Europeans have produced automobiles in the past--and very good ones too--in which the cylinders were all different sizes. The difference in dimensions was not great, of course, a matter of a very few thousands of an inch. This, however, was enough to cause the car to make noise and use too much oil if it was repaired by an American mechanic unfamiliar with the European patterns that lack the uniformity isolate.

Japan, too, has a passion for uniformity, though it is somewhat different from ours. All mats (tatami) on the floors of Japanese houses and all windows, doors, and panels are usually of identical dimensions in a given district. In newspaper advertisements of houses for sale or rent the dimensions are usually given in terms of the number of mats of a specific area. Despite this example of uniformity, the Japanese differ from us in a way which can have considerable economic results. In one case, for example, they manufactured a very large order of electronics parts according to rigid specifications which they were quite able to meet. When the product arrived in the United States, it was discovered that there were differences between various batches of these parts. The customer subsequently discovered that while the whole internal process of manufacture had been controlled, the Japanese had failed to standarize their gauges! It is no accident that in the United States there is a Bureau of Standards. Much of the success of this country's technical skill and productivity, which we are trying to pass on the other nations, rests on these and similar unstated patterns.

HOW SPACE COMMUNICATES

Spatial changes give a tone to a communication, accents it, and at times even override the spoken word. The flow and shift of distance between people as they interact with each other is part and parcel of the communication process. The normal conversational distance between strangers illustrates how important are the

dynamics of space interaction. If a person gets too close, the reaction is instantaneous and automatic--the other person backs up. And if he gets too close again, back we go again. I have observed an American backing up the entire length of a long corridor while a foreigner whom he considers pushy tries to catch up with him. This scene has been enacted thousands and thousands of times--one person trying to increase the distance in order to be at ease, while the other tries to decrease it for the same reason, neither one being aware of what was going on. We have here an example of the tremendous depth to which culture can condition behavior.

One thing that does confuse us and gets in the way of understanding cultural differences is that there are times in our culture when people are either distant or pushy in their use of space. We, therefore, simply associate the foreigner with the familiar; namely those people who have acted in such a way that our attention was drawn to their actions. The error is in jumping to the conclusion that the foreigner feels the same way the American does even though his overt acts are identical.

This was all suddenly brought into focus one time when I had the good fortune to be visited by a very distinguished and learned man who had been for many years a top-ranking diplomat representing a foreign country. After meeting him a number of times, I had become impressed with his extraordinary sensitivity to the small details of behavior that are so significant in the interaction process. Dr. X. was interested in some of the work several of us were doing at the time and asked permission to attend one of my lectures. He came to the front of the class at the end of the lecture to talk over a number of points made in the preceding hour. While talking he became quite involved in the implications of the lecture as well as what he was saying. We started out facing each other and as he talked I became dimly aware that he was standing a little too close and that I was beginning to back up. Fortunately I was able to suppress my first impulse and remain stationary because there was nothing to communicate aggression in his behavior except the conversational distance. His voice was eager, his manner intent, the set of his body communicated only interest and eagerness to talk. It also came to me in a flash that someone who had been so successful in the old school of diplomacy could not possibly let himself communicate something offensive to the other person except outside of his highly trained awareness.

By experimenting I was able to observe that as I moved away slightly, there was an associated shift in the pattern of interaction. He had more trouble expressing himself. If I shifted to where I felt comfortable (about twenty-one inches), he looked somewhat puzzled and hurt, almost as though he were saying: "Why is he acting that way? Here I am doing everything I can to talk to him in a friendly manner and he suddenly withdraws. Have I done anything wrong? Said something that I shouldn't?" Having ascertained that distance had a direct effect on his conversation, I stood my ground, letting him set the distance.

Not only is a vocal message qualified by the handling of distance, but the substance of a conversation can often demand special handling of space. There are certain things which are difficult to talk about unless one is within the proper conversational zone.

Not long ago I received a present of some seeds and chemicals along with the information that if I planted the seeds the chemicals would make them grow. Knowing little about hydroponics except that the plants should be suspended above the fluid in which chemicals are dissolved, I set out to find a suitable flowerpot. At every flower shop I was met with incredulity and forced to go through a routine involving a detailed explanation of just what it was I wanted and how hydroponics worked.

My ignorance of both hydroponics and florist shops made me feel somewhat ill at ease, so that I did not communicate in the manner that I use when I am speaking on a familiar subject in a familiar setting. The role that distance plays in a communication situation was brought home to me when I entered a shop in which the floor was filled with benches spaced at about twenty-inch intervals. On the other side of the benches was the female proprietor of the shop. As I entered, she craned her neck as though to reach over the benches, raised her voice slightly to bring it up to the proper level and said, "What was it you wanted?" I tried once. "What I'm looking for is a hydroponic flowerpot." "What kind of flowerpot?" still with the neck craned. At this point I found myself climbing over benches in an effort to close up the space. It was simply impossible for me to talk about such a subject in a setting of this sort at a distance of fifteen feet. It wasn't until I got to within three feet that I was able to speak with some degree of comfort.

Another example is one that will be familiar to millions of civilians who served in the Army during World War II. The Army, in its need to get technical about matters that are usually handled informally, made a mistake in the regulations on distance required for reporting to a superior officer. Everyone knows that the relationship between officers and men has certain elements which require distance and impersonality. This applied to officers of different ranks when they were in command relationship to each other. Instructions for reporting to a superior officer were that the junior officer was to proceed up to a point three paces in front of the officer's desk, stop, salute, and state his rank, his name, and his business: "Lieutenant X, reporting as ordered, sir." Now, what cultural norms does this procedure violate, and what does it communicate? It violates the conventions for the use of space. The distance is too great, by at least two feet, and does not fit the situation. The normal speaking distance for business matters, where impersonality is involved at the beginning of the conversation, is five and a half to eight feet. The distance required by the army regulations borders on the edge of what we would call "far." It evokes an automatic response to shout. This detracts from the respect which is supposed to be shown to the

superior officer. There are, of course, many subjects which it is almost impossible to talk about at this distance, and individual army officers recognize this by putting soldiers and junior officers at ease, asking them to sit down or permitting them to come closer. However, the first impression was that the Army was doing things the hard way.

For Americans the following shifts in the voice are associated with specific ranges of distance:

1.	Very close (3 in. to 6 in.)	Soft whisper; top secret
2.	Close (8 in. to 12 in.)	Audible whisper; very confidential
3.	Near (12 in. to 20 in.)	Indoors, soft voice; outdoors, full voice; confidential
4.	Neutral (20 in. to 36 in.)	Soft voice; low volume; personal subject matter
5.	Neutral (4½ ft. to 5 ft.)	Full voice; information of non-personal matter
6.	Public Distance (5½ ft. to 8 ft.)	Full voice with slight overloudness public information for others to hear
7.	Across the room (8 ft. to 20 ft.)	Loud voice; talking to a group
8.	Stretching the limits of distance	20 ft. to 24 ft. indoors; up to 100 ft. outdoors; hailing distance, departures

In Latin America the interaction distance is much less than it is in the United States. Indeed, people cannot talk comfortably with one another unless they are very close to the distance that evokes either sexual or hostile feelings in the North American. The result is that when they move close, we withdraw and back away. As a consequence, they think we are distant or cold, withdrawn and unfriendly. We, on the other hand, are constantly accusing them of breathing down our necks, crowding us, and spraying our faces.

Americans who have spent some time in Latin America without learning these space considerations make other adaptations, like barricading themselves behind their desks, using chairs and typewriter tables to keep the Latin American at what is to us a comfortable distance. The result is that the Latin American may even climb over the obstacles until he has achieved a distance at which he can comfortably talk.

MODULE III
CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

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As we discussed in Module I, the attitude and responsiveness of the client will help to determine the tone and line of questioning which will be most productive. Although the first few minutes of the interview could be thought to constitute the last stage of planning, the process of planning frequently continues well into the actual interview. This is particularly true in the case of "walk-in" or unscheduled interviews. In some programs, especially those that are co-housed with the AFDC offices, public assistance applicants are referred immediately to the child support office; this is considered part of the intake process. These situations present unique challenges to the child support interviewer, since very little information is available prior to the confrontation, and planning actually takes place simultaneously with initial questioning.

In this module, we will examine various strategies for conducting child support interviews./1/ These include the following:

- Techniques for opening the interview
- Observation strategies
- Listening strategies
- Questioning techniques
- Responding strategies
- Techniques for terminating the interview.

Underlying all of these techniques and strategies is the need for the interviewer to establish and maintain a relationship with the interviewee that is conducive to the open exchange of information.

Before the interview actually begins, it is important for the interviewer to reflect on his or her own readiness to conduct an interview. Specifically, the interviewer needs to examine any preconceptions that may impede the progress of the interview; such preconceptions can include personal bias or prejudice and the interviewer's acceptance of his or her own role.

As we discuss in Module I, some child support workers are not comfortable with the amount of authority they have and with the potential impact of their decisions on the lives of people. Such insecurity is easily transmitted to individuals being interviewed, and can cause the interviewer to lose control of the situation. It is crucial for the interviewer to recognize that authority need not be oppressive; the appropriate authoritative tone can serve to enhance the responsiveness of the interviewee and provide security to both parties.

To ensure productive interviews, the worker must be as well-prepared as possible. The following checklist will help determine whether the interviewer actually is ready to begin:

- Collect all necessary records and materials. This will help to avoid basic or obvious questions that waste time.
- Using background research, determine specific objectives. Consider both short and long range goals of the interview.
- Develop an interview strategy.
- Determine the desired interview setting and tone.
- Prevent all possible distractions and interruptions.
- Provide an atmosphere which is comfortable to both parties and conducive to productive discussion.
- Begin the interview with confidence in your authority and with your readiness to process the case.

OPENING THE INTERVIEW

The interviewer should strive to establish rapport with the interviewee as soon as possible. There are several ways to do this. To begin with, the interviewer should employ conventional "ice-breaking techniques." While it may seem boring or uninformative to chat for a few minutes about the weather or current events, this conversation can give both interviewer and interviewee the chance to become comfortable with each other. The interviewer should strive to make the interviewee feel at ease with him or her, for it is only under this circumstance that trust can develop between the two individuals.

Orientation strategies also are useful both for the interviewer and the interviewee. Especially when the person who is to be interviewed has appeared at the request of the child support worker, there should be a brief explanation of the purpose of the meeting. If the interview was initiated by the client, time should be given for an explanation as to why such a meeting was requested. In either situation, the interviewee should be encouraged to talk freely for a few minutes. This conversation can provide the perceptive interviewer with valuable information. Through what may seem to be idle conversation, the interviewer is able to determine the best way to communicate, what emotional state must be dealt with, and some basic insight into the person to be interviewed.

In the situation of the child support interview, the interviewer might begin in this way:

- Describe the purpose of the interview. Focus on benefits of the service, and take the approach that you want to serve both the interviewee and the child.

- Summarize the status of the case. Mention specific problems and ask for help resolving them.

- Preview kinds of questions that you will be asking during the middle phase of the interview. Provide interviewee with expectations for what will happen in the future.

As soon as greeting and preliminary explanations are over, the interviewer can begin the process of information gathering. The following sections describe skills and techniques that can help the child support interviewer to gather information more effectively.

OBSERVING

The child support worker must have the ability to observe an interview closely, to analyze it objectively, and to recall it precisely. Observations should include both what the interviewee says and what he or she does not say; particular attention should be paid to non-verbal signals of emotional responses.

Of all the things to be observed, only a small percentage is registered consciously; an even smaller percentage is recalled. This is inevitable, because people have limited capacities to see what is going on. However, the seriousness of this limitation is linked to the extent to which we allow barriers to communication and perception to affect us. Some of these barriers, which we discuss in Modules I and II, can be minimized once we recognize and deal with them.

The skilled interviewer already is aware of the many personal biases that shape individual perceptions of a single situation. For example, one interviewer, who by temperament and upbringing is relatively reserved, may find certain behaviors overly aggressive. Another, whose temperament and upbringing differ, may perceive that the interviewee possesses confidence and self-assurance. Likewise, passivity may be interpreted either as weakness or as tolerance, depending on the perspective of the observer.

LISTENING

The distinction between hearing and listening rests on the degree and quality of attention we pay to what someone else is saying. While most of us are born with the physiological capacity to hear, we all must acquire listening skills. These skills are prerequisites for effective interviewing.

To meet the dual goals of gathering information and establishing a comfortable and productive relationship with the interviewee, the interviewer not only needs to listen to what is being said, but listen with intuition and psychological acuity. However, this is a challenging task, because interviewers bear such heavy responsiblity for providing direction to interviews.

The intense concentration and level of attention required to conduct an effective interview can become very tiring and stressful. In addition, there are a number of physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual, and environmental barriers that can impede effective listening by child support interviewers.

A number of these barriers are cased by the speaker; some by uncontrollable external influences, but a significant number are cased by the listener. (See Module I for further discussion.) Child support interviewers can increase their proficiency by working to reduce those things which are within their control. The extent to which interviewers can listen objectively also may be affected by the differences between the socioeconomic, educational and cultural standards of interviewees and those of the interviewer. Although personal standards should not be permitted to affect the interviewer's contact with clients, basic attitudes and prejudices almost always will exert some influence on such contacts. However, the effect of these factors can be minimized if the interviewer recognizes their existence and their effect on interviews. The following includes some of the factors that can create barriers to effective listening.

Personal prejudice or bias. As we discuss in Module I, all of us hold certain prejudices and biases. Some are harmless; others can interfere with our ability to gather information from interviewees. Sometimes, prejudices can be so deeply rooted in the subconscious that we are unaware of them. To avoid being victimized by such preconceptions, the interviewer needs to spend time preparing for, reflecting on, and processing the interview. In addition, the interviewer needs to be aware at all times that his or her questioning style, use of space, eye movement, etc., can communicate prejudice to the client.

Too much or irrelevant detail being provided. Interviewees who talk on and on may be trying to avoid questions. Similarly, workers who talk on and on may be trying to avoid broaching embarrassing topics or asserting authority. To avoid being distracted by irrelevant detail, workers should outline ahead of time the material they want to cover during an interview. While they listen to a response, they should prepare feedback and followup.

Distraction. We all can be distracted by a host of environmental factors--noise, crowded conditions, lack of privacy. However, listeners often create their own distractions--by fiddling with objects on a desk, shuffling papers, fidgetting, etc. Interviewers should identify distractions they create for themselves or for others, and eliminate them.

Insufficient eye contact. Workers need to be aware of how eye movements contribute to communication. In addition, interviewers should understand that an individual's conception of "acceptable" eye contact is culturally determined. For example, very traditional Southern women may lower their eyes when talking to a man, while Northeasterners will be more likely to make direct eye contact. Interviewers should be straightforward in their own eye movements at the same time that they are analyzing the eye contact made by the interviewee.

Monotonous tone of voice. A monotonous voice can lull the listener into inattention. Interviewers need to acquire the self-discipline to listen carefully to matter they have heard discussed many times by many people. To break the monotony, interviewers also should provide positive verbal feedback. Such feedback, which is discussed on page 78 , also may elicit more information from the interviewee.

Variations in language usage. Interviewers sometimes find that interviewees employ figures of speech or colloquialisms that are unfamiliar. If this occurs, the interviewer should not hesitate to seek clarification. In addition, the interviewer should strive to use language that the interviewee understands. Jargon shoud be avoided.

Overly strong emotional response. In general, interviewers should curb their emotional responses to interviewees. Judgmental responses can inhibit communication.

In addition to recognizing and minimizing barriers, there are certain techniques which, if developed by the interviewer, can enhance listening skills and contribute to more effective interview results:

- Develop the desire to listen
- Try to empathize with the speaker and his/her point of view
- When you disagree don't begin preparing a rebuttal in your head instead of listening
- Try to sift the main points from the supporting points or detail
- Try to maintain eye contact and use positive non-verbal feedback
- To keep your mind from wandering, concentrate on what the person has said, listen between the lines, and assess the implications of what is heard

- Do not interrupt
- Listen for significance, not just meaning--i.e., what do respondent's words mean to him or her
- Be aware of "signal words" that trigger emotional reactions within yourself; curb emotional responses
- Use mirror questions and statements to maintain a high degree of understanding and receptivity.

The child support worker must use and understand a variety of techniques to listen effectively. Active listening skills require practice and self-awareness on the part of the worker. However, once they are acquired they are invaluable assets to the interviewer.

QUESTIONING: CHOOSING AN APPROACH

Questioning is one of the primary tools used by child support interviewers. For interviews to be as productive as possible, the interviewer needs to develop skills for asking questions that will provide needed information.

As previously discussed, interviews must be well-planned. The planning process should help the interviewer determine the information to be sought, the tone to be set, and the questioning techniques to be used. While the interview needs to be thought out and planned ahead of time, it should not be structured to the point of rigidity. The interviewer needs to remain flexible at all times so that he or she will be able to ask appropriate questions in a way that encourages the interviewee to respond. Because the child support interviewer has cases which vary tremendously and clients who respond differently, he or she must be prepared to use different approaches to information gathering in different situation.

Questions generally are asked to accomplish one of two basic purposes: to obtain specific information or to direct the conversation productively. Depending upon the situation of the interview and the desired information, the following approaches may be employed.

Direct questioning. With this method, the interviewer is in control. He or she determines topics for discussion, and frames highly structured, carefully delimited, and precise questions that are designed to elicit terse, succinct, and highly responsive answers.

The advantage of this technique is that it tends to be highly efficient. It takes far less time to ask or answer pointed questions than it does to frame or answer less pointed ones. Also, this kind of question tends to elicit responses that include quantifiable data; as such, it is an extremely useful complement to a written questionnaire.

The disadvantage of this technique is that it tends to make the interviewer seem inflexible, particularly when he or she is employing a standardized list of questions. Direct questions also tend to discourage the casual observation by the interviewee. Sometimes, this is desireable; at other times, the casual observation can trigger a chain of highly informative questions and responses. In the child support interview, in particular, the techniques of direct questioning should not be used in isolation.

Non-directive questioning. In this situation; the interviewee is encouraged to speak freely. Within limits, he or she decides what subject matter is to be discussed, and in what sequence. Used in counseling and problem-solving situations, this technique can be extremely effective. It encourages the interviewee to select material for discussion that he or she considers to be most relevant. In addition, it enables the interviewer to get to know the interviewee.

The primary disadvantage of this technique is that it is difficult to control. Non-directive questioning requires psychological insight and personal sensitivity on the part of the interviewer. An interviewer who lacks these qualities runs the risk of offending the interviewee by interrupting him or her or by seeming undirected an unconcerned. In addition, this technique is more time-consuming than others. Because the interviewee sets the pace, it may also become more difficult for the interviewer to manage time and conduct interviews within fixed time constraints. Finally, this technique tends to produce non-quantifiable data. While subjective observations can be extremely interesting and useful, their applicability in situations involving legal rights is circumscribed carefully. The most effective interviewers employ both of these techniques. They recognize the potential and restrictions of each technique, and match their strategy with their own goals and the personalities of those whom they interview.

LEVELS OF QUESTIONING

In addition to several types of questions, there are also two primary levels of questioning, first-level and secondary. Each of these is discussed below.

First-level questions. First-level, or primary questions, usually are most useful when you want to introduce a topic, or make a transition from one topic to another. Primary questions can be formulated ahead of time to ensure that necessary information is obtained whenever possible. Questionnaires are composed of first-level questions.

Secondary questions. Secondary questions should followup and clarify the answers to primary questions. To ask effective secondary questions, the interviewer must listen carefully to responses which have been made and be sensitive to what is being communicated by the interviewee through non-verbal communication. It is difficult for the child support interviewer to predetermine secondary questions, for they usually are prompted by responses to primary questions.

There are several ways to pose the secondary questions. Secondary questions need not always take the interrogatory form; the interviewer can make an assertion, pause, or utter a neutral phrase. At this stage of the interview, it frequently is desireable to use indirect questions as a tool for identifying areas that can be probed more thoroughly later with a more structured approach.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

As we pointed out earlier, the child support interviewer needs to know when to employ different questioning approaches and levels of questioning. In addition, he or she must be able to combine several types of questions in order to elicit informative responses from interviewees. When they are organized into a carefully-planned strategy, the following kinds of questions work effectively:

- Indirect, or open-ended questions. Open-ended questions call for longer and rather detailed answers. They encourage a full response and aid in getting additional information about the interviewee. These questions frequently begin with who, what, when, where, why, and how.

- Direct, or close-ended questions. These elicit a simple yes, or no, or other short answer; they generally should be used to verify information already collected in a case record.

- Forced-choice questions. These questions force the interviewee to make a choice between two or more possible responses. This type of question is designed to prevent an ambiguous or non-committal response.

- Follow-up questions. If responses are evasive or incomplete, a follow-up question is necessary. This requires the rephrasing or restatement of a question, possibly combined with a request for clarification.

- Probes. Probes can supplement a primary question when the response to the latter is brief, inadequate, or inconsistent with prior information. While probes can be rather difficult to handle without making the client defensive, they can help maintain a receptive atmosphere conducive to productive interaction.

Examples of these types of questions can be found at the end of this module. (See Figure III-1.)

Potential problems in questioning. No matter what strategy the interviewer chooses to employ, certain pitfalls should be avoided. These are discussed below:

- Asking leading questions. The content of a leading question, or the manner in which it is posed, strongly implies a particular answer. In fact, even if the implied answer is false, there is a good likelihood that the interviewee will not correct it.

- Sounding judgmental. Interviewers should guard against verbalizing questions and making responses that imply judgment on what is being discussed.

- Compulsive talking. Brief periods of silence can be beneficial. A cooperative client simply may be thinking or deciding how to phrase a response. A reluctant client may feel uncomfortable about the silence and become more responsive as a consequence. Silence also can provide the interviewer with the opportunity to collect his or her thoughts.

- Using professional jargon. Many of the words, phrases, and acronyms that are common to the vocabulary of the child support interviewer, have little or no meaning to individuals outside of the Program. Special efforts should be made to refrain from using terminology that may confuse the interviewee or otherwise inhibit communication.

RESPONDING

As we discuss in Module I, many factors affect the accurate reception and transmission of messages. In the interview situation, in particular, good communication between participants is absolutely essential, and must be encouraged by the interviewer. While there are competing theories to explain how communication takes place, there are foolproof effective ways to determine whether people are communicating effectively in a particular situation. Two methods which the interviewer can use to ensure that he or she is interpreting correctly the responses of the interviewee include repetition and mirroring. Each of these is discussed below.

Repetition. This term refers to the restatement, in the same or very similar language, of a question, comment, or series of comments previously articulated. Repetition is useful for clarification and for encouraging continued discussion on a particular subject.

Mirroring. This term refers to a spoken "instant replay" of a segment of a communication. It allows for confirmation, adjustment, or denial of previous remarks to occur. This technique enhances the likelihood that an interviewer will understand what he or she has heard from an interviewee. It also permits the interviewer to confront an interviewee with apparent discrepancies.

FEEDBACK

Feedback is a very valuable interviewing tool. It gives the interviewer the opportunity to respond subtly to what he or she is hearing, and to provide direction to what is being said. However, it also provides the interviewer with the means to evaluate what the interviewee is saying.

In this section, we will discuss responses made by both the child support interviewer and the individual being interviewed. Learning to recognize, control, and interpret responses can contribute to more effective and productive interviews.

Negative verbal feedback. Feedback during interviews can be verbal or nonverbal, and positive or negative. Examples of each is discussed below. The following are examples of negative verbal feedback that the interviewer should be looking for as he or she communicates with a client:

- Oververbalized response. The client provides excessive detail; tends to delay response to question or issue posed by interviewer.

- Irrelevant response. The answer has nothing to do with the question asked. It has no bearing on the subject or purpose of the interview.

- Inaccurate response. The information may be purposely or accidently false, but it is inaccurate, detrimental, or unacceptable.

- Partial response. The client partially answers a question but fails to mention relevant information.

The interviewer, too, must be aware that he or she can provide negative verbal feedback by being careless or inattentive. Caution should be exercised to avoid this.

Negative nonverbal feedback. Indications of negative nonverbal feedback, include the following:

- Drumming fingers on desk or tapping foot on floor

- Frowning

- Squirming in seat or sitting on edge of chair
- Looking at one's wristwatch
- Avoiding eye contact--gazing out of window
- Playing with some object (ring, pen, keys).
- Silence.

Again, the interviewer as well as the interviewee can provide negative non-verbal feedback. Interviewers should guard against this tendency.

Positive verbal feedback. In contrast to negative feedback, positive verbal feedback takes the form of succinct responses and is demonstrated by:

- Volunteered additional information
- Questions of clarification
- Candid observations
- Succinct verbalized responses
- Restatement or paraphrasing
- Reflection or tentatively verbalizing the interviewer's comprehension of the client's feelings.

Methods that the interviewer may use to provide positive verbal feedback include the following:

- Occasional affirmative nodding of the head
- Leaning forward
- Sitting with hands and arms unfolded
- Smiling appropriately
- Direct eye contact
- Sitting erect in chair.

Physical contact can be another form of non-verbal positive feedback, although expert opinion varies sharply on the appropriateness of touching the interviewee at any point during the interview. If this techniques is used, it should be brief, natural, and accompanied by other verbal and non-verbal indications of emotional or psychological support. (For further discussion of proximity, see Module I.)

TERMINATING THE INTERVIEW

Many child support interviewers find they have problems in terminating interviews effectively. They question when closure is appropriate and how to bring the interview to closure.

When the interviewer senses that he or she has gathered all data forthcoming at this time, he or she should summarize briefly what has been discussed, what has been accomplished, and what will happen next. The summary provides a smooth transition to departure and also serves to ensure understanding. If determinations have been made or agreements reached, these should be reviewed to make sure there is a mutual understanding of what has happened and of the ramifications of these actions. Finally, the interviewer should close by restating what will happen next. The interviewer also may wish to encourage the client to call back with any additional or new information that might be pertinent.

By following this procedure, the interviewer should be able to gather information in an effective and productive way. Further, subsequent interviews may well be less stressful and more informative because they will be anticipated and understood by the interviewee.

Although the actual interview ends when the interviewer leaves, the interviewer's work is not finished until the results have been recorded. In Module V information will be provided to assist in determining methods for effective documentation.

FIGURE III-1: SAMPLE QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

INDIRECT, OR OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

These call for longer answers and serve to encourage additional information that might not surface in response to another approach.

Sample:

- "How do you feel about having your ex-husband visit your child?"

DIRECT, OR CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS

The close-ended question calls for a brief and very specific answer.

Sample:

- "Would you like for your ex-husband to visit your child?"

FORCED-CHOICE QUESTIONS

A forced choice question requires the interviewer to select one answer from two or more possible options.

Sample:

- "Are you paid monthly, semimonthly, bi-weekly, or weekly?"

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

These questions are used to gather additional information to prompt the interviewee to expound on a previous response.

Sample:

- Initial Question--"Where does your child's father live?"
  Response--"I don't know, but I think he lives in town."
  Follow-up Question--"Whereabouts in town?"

PROBES

These secondary questions direct the interviewer to think further about a prior question and can be used to pursue a superficial answer.

Sample:

Initial Question--"Where does your child's father live?"
Response--"I don't know, but I think he lives in town."
Probe--"What makes you think that?"

MODULE III
SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

WINKING, BLINKING, AND NODS

by
Julius Fast

WINKING, BLINKING, AND NODS*

It is a widely-held belief that our eyes are capable of communicating a vast range of emotions, and many examples from literature, the arts, and popular belief can be cited to support this observation. Our eyes, however, do not communicate by themselves; they operate in conjunction with other facial and body movements to convey a person's feelings. In this selection from Body Language, Julius Fast discusses just how telling our eyes are, how we can learn to read them, and how eye movements are culturally related.

THE STARE THAT DEHUMANIZES

The cowpuncher sat his horse loosely and his fingers hovered above his gun while his eyes, ice cold, sent chills down the rustler's back.

A familiar situation? It happens in every western novel, just as in every love story the heroine's eyes melt while the hero's eyes burn into hers. In literature, even the best literature, eyes are steely, knowing, mocking, piercing, glowing and so on.

Are they really? Are they ever? Is there such a thing as a burning glance, or a cold glance or a hurt glance? In truth there isn't. Far from being windows of the soul, the eyes are physiological dead ends, simply organs of sight and no more, differently colored in different people to be sure, but never really capable of expressing emotion in themselves.

And yet again and again we read and hear and even tell of the eyes being wise, knowing, good, bad, indifferent. Why is there such confusion? Can so many people be wrong? If the eyes do not show emotion, then why the vast literature, the stories and legends about them?

Of all parts of the human body that are used to transmit information, the eyes are the most important and can transmit the most subtle nuances. Does this contradict the fact that the eyes do not show emotion? Not really. While the eyeball itself shows nothing, the emotional impact of the eyes occurs because of their use and the use of the face around them. The reason they have so confounded observers is because by length of glance, by opening of eyelids, by squinting and by a dozen little manipulations of the skin and eyes, almost any meaning can be sent out.

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But the most important technique of eye management is the look, or the stare. With it we can often make or break another person. How? By giving him human or nonhuman status.

Simply, eye management in our society boils down to two facts. One, we do not stare at another human being. Two, staring is reserved for a non-person. We stare at art, at sculpture, at scenery. We go to the zoo and stare at the animals, the lions, the monkeys, the gorillas. We stare at them for as long as we please, as intimately as we please, but we do not stare at humans if we want to accord them human treatment.

We may use the same stare for the side-show freak, but we do not really consider him a human being. He is an object at which we have paid money to stare, and in the same way we may stare at an actor on a stage. The real man is masked too deeply behind his role for our stare to bother either him or us. However, the new theater that brings the actor down into the audience often gives us an uncomfortable feeling. By virtue of involving us, the audience, the actor suddenly loses his non-person status and staring at him becomes embarrassing to us.

As I said before, a Southern white may stare at a black in the same way, making him, by the stare, into an object rather than a person. If we wish pointedly to ignore someone, to treat him with an element of contempt, we can give him the same stare, the slightly unfocused look that does not really see him, the cutting stare of the socially elite.

Servants are often treated this way as are waiters, waitresses and children. However, this may be a mutually protective device. It allows the servants to function efficiently in their overlapping universe without too much interference from us, and it allows us to function comfortably without acknowledging the servant as a fellow human. The same is true of children and waiters. It would be an uncomfortable world if each time we were served by a waiter we had to introduce ourselves and indulge in social amenities.

A TIME FOR LOOKING

With unfamiliar human beings, when we acknowledge their humanness, we must avoid staring at them, and yet we must also avoid ignoring them. To make them into people rather than objects, we use a deliberate and polite inattention. We look at them long enough to make it quite clear that we see them, and then we immediately look away. We are saying in body language, "I know you are there," and a moment later we add, "But I would not dream of intruding on your privacy."

The important thing in such an exchange is that we do not catch the eye of the one whom we are recognizing as a person. We look at him without locking glances, and then we immediately look away. Recognition is not permitted.

There are different formulas for the exchange of glances depending on where the meeting takes place. If you pass someone in the street you may eye the oncoming person till you are about eight feet apart, then, you must look away as you pass. Before the eight foot distance is reached, each will signal in which direction he will pass. This is done with a brief look in that direction. Each will veer slightly, and the passing is done smoothly.

For this passing encounter Dr. Erving Goffman in Behavior in Public Places says that the quick look and the lowering of the eyes is body language for, "I trust you. I am not afraid of you."

To strengthen this signal, you look directly at the other's face before looking away.

Sometimes the rules are hard to follow, particularly if one of the two people wears dark glasses. It becomes impossible to discover just what they are doing. Are they looking at you too long, too intently? Are they looking at you at all? The person wearing glasses feels protected and assumes that he can stare without being noticed in his staring. However, this is a self-deception. To the other person, dark glasses seem to indicate that the wearer is always staring at him.

We often use this look-and-away technique when we meet famous people. We want to assure them that we are respecting their privacy, that we would not dream of staring at them. The same is true of the crippled or physically handicapped. We look briefly and then look away before the stare can be said to be a stare. It is the technique we use for any unusual situation where too long a stare would be embarrassing. When we see an interracial couple we use this technique. We might use it when we see a man with an unusual beard, with extra long hair, with outlandish clothes, or a girl with a minimal mini-skirt may attract this look-and-away.

Of course the opposite is also true. If we wish to put a person down we may do so by staring longer than is acceptably polite. Instead of dropping our gazes when we lock glances, we continue to stare. The person who disapproves of interracial marriage or dating will stare rudely at the interracial couple. If he dislikes long hair, short dresses or beards he may show it with a longer-than-acceptable stare.

THE AWKWARD EYES

The look-and-away stare is reminiscent of the problem we face in adolescence in terms of our hands. What do we do with them? Where do we hold them? Amateur actors are also made conscious of this. They are suddenly aware of their hands as awkward appendages that must somehow be used gracefully and naturally.

In the same way, in certain circumstances, we become aware of our glances as awkward appendages. Where shall we look? What shall we do with our eyes?

Two strangers seated across from each other in a railway dining car have the option of introducing themselves and facing a meal of inconsequential and perhaps boring talk, or ignoring each other and desperately trying to avoid each other's glance. Cornelia Otis Skinner, describing such a situation in an essay, wrote, "They re-read the menu, they fool with the cutlery, they inspect their own fingernails as if seeing them for the first time. Comes the inevitable moment when glances meet, but they meet only to shoot instantly away and out the window for an intent view of the passing scene."

The same awkard eye dictates our looking behavior in elevators and crowded buses and subway trains. When we get on an elevator or train with a crowd we look briefly and then look away at once without locking glances. We say, with our look, "I see you. I do not know you, but you are a human and I will not stare at you."

In the subway or bus where long rides in very close circumstances are a necessity, we may be hard put to find some way of not staring. We sneak glances, but look away before our eyes can lock. Or we look with an unfocused glance that misses the eyes and settles on the head, the mouth, the body--for any place but the eyes is an acceptable looking spot for the unfocused glance.

If our eyes do meet we can sometimes mitigate the message with a brief smile. The smile must not be too long or too obvious. It must say, "I am sorry we have looked, but we both know it was an accident."

BEDROOM EYES

The awkward eye is a common enough occurrence for all of us to have experienced it at one time or another. Almost all actions and interactions between humans depend on mutual glances. The late Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset, in his book Man and People, spoke of "the look" as something that comes directly from within a man "with the straight-line accuracy of a bullet." He felt that the eye, with its lids and socket, its iris and pupil, was equivalent to a "whole theatre with its stage and actors."

The eye muscles, Ortega said, are marvelously subtle and because of this every glance is minutely differentiated from every other glance. There are so many different looks that it is nearly impossible to name them, but he cited, "the look that lasts but an instant and the insistent look; the look that slips over the surface of the thing looked at and the look that grips it like a hook; the direct look and the oblique look whose extreme form has its own name, 'looking out of the corner of one's eye'."

He also listed the "sideways glance" which differs from any other oblique look although its axis is still on the bias.

Every look, Ortega said, tells us what goes on inside the person who gives it, and the intent to communicate with a look is more genuinely revealing when the sender of the look is unaware of just how he sends it.

Like other researchers into body language Ortega warned that a look in itself does not give the entire story, even though it has a meaning. A word in a sentence has a meaning too, but only in the context of the sentence can we learn the complete meaning of the word. So too with a look. Only in the context of an entire situation is a look entirely meaningful.

There are also looks that want to see but not be seen. These the Spanish philosopher called sideways glances. In any situation we may study someone and look as long as we wish, providing the other person is not aware that we are looking, providing our look is hidden. The moment his eyes move to lock with ours, our glance must slide away. The more skilled the person, the better he is at stealing these sideways glances.

In a charming description Ortega labels one look "the most effective, the most suggestive, the most delicious and enchanting." He called it the most complicated because it is not only furtive, but it is also the opposite of furtive, because it makes it obvious that it is looking. This is the look given with lidded eyes, the sleepy look or calculating look or appraising look, the look a painter gives his canvas as he steps back from it, what the French call les yeux en coulisse.

Describing this look, Ortega said the lids are almost three-quarters closed and it appears to be hiding itself, but in fact the lids compress the look and "shoot it out like an arrow."

"It is the look of eyes that are, as it were, asleep but which behind the cloud of sweet drowsiness are utterly awake. Anyone who has such a look possesses a treasure."

Ortega said that Paris throws itself at the feet of anyone with this look. Louis XV's DuBarry was supposed to have had it, and so was Lucien Guitry. In our own Hollywood, Robert Mitchum certainly had it and it set him up for years as a masculine sex symbol. Mae West copied it and the French actress Simone Signoret has it so perfectly controlled that even in middle age she comes across as a very sexy and attractive woman.

OTHER CULTURES, OTHER LOOKS

The recognition of the eye as a means of communication, or of a look as having special significance is nothing new. Looking is something that has always had strong emotions attached to it and has been forbidden, under certain circumstances, in prehistory

and legend. Lot's wife was turned to a pillar of salt for looking back, and Orpheus lost Eurydice by looking at her. Adam, when he tasted the fruit of knowledge, was afraid to look at God.

The significance of looking is universal, but usually we are not sure of just how we look or how we are looked at. Honesty demands, in our culture, that we look someone straight in the eye. Other cultures have other rules, as a principal in a New York City high school recently discovered.

A young girl at the high school, a fifteen-year-old Puerto Rican, had been caught in the washroom with a group of girls suspected of smoking. Most of the group were known trouble-makers, and while this young girl, Livia, had no record, the principal after a brief interview was convinced of her guilt and decided to suspend her with the others.

"It wasn't what she said," he reported later. "It was simply her attitude. There was something sly and suspicious about her. She just wouldn't meet my eye. She wouldn't look at me."

It was true. Livia at her interview with the principal stared down at the floor in what was a clear-cut guilty attitude and refused to meet his eyes.

"But she's a good girl," Livia's mother insisted. Not to the school, for she was too much of a "troublemaker" the principal felt, to come to the authorities with her protest. Instead, she turned to her neighbors and friends. As a result there was a demonstration of Puerto Rican parents at the school the next morning and the ugly stirrings of a threatened riot.

Fortunately, John Flores taught Spanish literature at the school, and John lived only a few doors from Livia and her family. Summoning his own courage, John asked for an interview with the principal.

"I know Livia and her parents," he told the principal. "And she's a good girl. I am sure there has been some mistake in this whole matter."

"If there was a mistake," the principal said uneasily, "I'll be glad to rectify it. There are thirty mothers outside yelling for my blood. But I questioned the child myself, and if ever I saw guilt written on a face--she wouldn't even meet my eyes!"

John drew a sign of relief, and then very carefully, for he was too new in the school to want to tread on toes, he explained some basic facts of Puerto Rican culture to the principal.

"In Puerto Rico a nice girl, a good girl," he explained, "does not meet the eyes of an adult. Refusing to do so is a sign of respect and obedience. It would be as difficult for Livia to look you in the eye as it would be for her to misbehave, or for her mother to come to you with a complaint. In our culture, this is just not accepted behavior for a respectable family."

Fortunately the principal was a man who knew how to admit that he was wrong. He called Livia and her parents and the most vocal neighbors in and once again discussed the problem. In the light of John Flores' explanation it became obvious to him that Livia was not avoiding his eyes out of defiance, but out of a basic demureness. Her slyness, he now saw, was shyness. In fact, as the conference progressed and the parents relaxed, he realized that Livia was indeed a gentle and sweet girl.

The outcome of the entire incident was a deeper, more meaningful relationship between the school and the community--but that of course is another story. What is of particular interest in this story is the strange confusion of the principal. How did he so obviously misinterpret all the signals of Livia's behavior?

Livia was using body language to say, "I am a good girl. I respect you and the school. I respect you too much to answer your questions, too much to meet your eyes with shameless boldness, too much to defend myself. But surely my very attitude tells you all this."

How could such a clear-cut message be interpreted as, "I defy you. I will not answer your questions. I will not look you in the eyes because I am a deceitful child. I will evade your questions slyly--"

The answer of course is a cultural one. Different cultures have different customs and, of course, different body language. They also have different looks and different meanings to the same looks.

In America, for instance, a man is not supposed to look at a woman for any length of time unless she gives him her permission with a body language signal, a smile, a backward glance, a direct meeting of his eye. In other countries different rules apply.

In America, if a woman looks at a man for too long a period of time, she commits herself to a verbal approach. Her signal says, "I am interested. You can approach me." In Latin countries, though freer body movements are permissible, such a look might be a direct invitation to a physical "pass." It becomes obvious then why a girl like Livia would not look the principal in the eye.

Again, in our country, two men are not allowed to stare at each other for more than a brief period of time unless they intend to fight or to become intimate. Any man who looks at another man for too long embarrasses and annoys him and the other man begins to wonder just what he wants.

This is another example of the rigidity of the rules of looking. If someone stares at us and we meet his eye and catch him staring, it is his duty to look away first. If he does not look away as we engage his eye, then we become uncomfortable and aware that something is wrong. Again we become embarrassed and annoyed.

A LONG LOOK AT ONESELF

In an attempt to discover just how some of these rules for visual communication work, Dr. Gerhard Neilson of Copenhagen analyzed the "looks" of the subjects in his self-confrontation studies. To discover how long, and when, the people being interviewed looked at the interviewer, he filmed interviews and replayed them a number of times in slow motion.

While he started with no clear-cut idea of how long one man would look at another during an interview, he was surprised to find how little looking there actually was. The man who looked at his interviewer the most, still looked away 27 percent of the time. The man who looked at his interviewer the least looked away 92 percent of the time. Half of the people interviewed looked away for half of the time they were being interviewed.

Dr. Neilson found that when people spoke a lot they looked at their partners very little; when they listened a lot they also looked a lot. He reports that he expected people to look at each other more when they listened more, but he was surprised to find them looking less when they spoke more.

He found that when people start to speak, they look away from the partners at first. There is a subtle timing, he explains in speaking, listening, looking and looking away. Most people look away either immediately before or after the beginning of one out of every four speeches they make. A few look away at the beginning of half of their speeches. As they finish speaking, half the people look at their partners.

As to why so many people refuse to meet the eyes of their partners during a conversation, Dr. Neilson believes this is a way of avoiding distraction.

HOW LONG IS A GLANCE

Another study, carried out by Dr. Ralph V. Exline at the University of Delaware, involved 40 men and 40 women, all freshmen and sophomores. In the study a man interviewed 20 men and 20 women and a woman interviewed the other 20 of each sex. Half the students were questioned by both interviewers about intimate subjects; their plans, desires, needs and fears. The other half were asked about recreational interests, reading, movies, sports.

Dr. Exline found that when the students were interviewed about personal subjects, they didn't look at the interviewer as often as they did when they were interviewed about recreational subjects. Women, however, in both types of interview, looked at the interviewers more frequently than men did.

What seems to come across from both these studies, and others of a similar nature, is that when someone looks away while he's speaking, it generally means he's still explaining himself and doesn't want to be interrupted.

A locking of his gaze with his partner's at this point would be a signal to interrupt when he paused. If he pauses and is not looking at his conversational partner, it means he hasn't yet finished. He is signaling, "This is what I want to say. What is your answer?"

If you look away from the person who is speaking to you while you are listening, it is a signal, "I am not completely satisfied with what you are saying. I have some qualifications."

If you look away while you are speaking it may mean, "I am not certain of what I am saying."

If while you are listening, you look at the speaker, you signal, "I agree with you," or "I am interested in what you are saying."

If while you are speaking, you look at the listener, you may be signaling, "I am certain of what I am saying."

There are also elements of concealment in looking away from your partner. If you look away while he is speaking, you signal, "I don't want you to know what I feel." This is particularly true if the partner is critical or insulting. It is something like an ostrich burying his head in the sand. "If I cannot see you, you cannot hurt me." This is the reason children will often refuse to look at you when you are scolding them.

However, there are more complexities here than meet the eye . . . or the glance. Looking away during a conversation may be a means of concealing something. Therefore when someone else looks away, we may think he is concealing something. To practice deceit we may sometimes deliberately look at our partner instead of refusing to meet his glance.

In addition to length and direction of glances, there is a good deal of signaling involved in the act of closing the lid. In addition to the half-lidded look Ortega descried, Birdwhistell states that five young nurses, in a series of tests, reported twenty-three different positons of lid closure that they could distinguish.

But they all agreed that only four out of the twenty-three "meant anything." Retesting allowed Dr. Birdwhistell to label these four positions, "open-eyed, droopy-lidded, squinting, eyes-closed-tight."

Working from the opposite end, trying to get the girls to reproduce the lid positions, was not so successful. All could reproduce five of the twenty-three positions, but only one could reproduce more than five.

Using a group of men in the same type of experiment, he found that all could reproduce at least ten positions. Unexpectedly men were more facile at winking. Some of the men could reproduce fifteen different positions, and one--fantastically eloquent in body languague--came with thirty-five different eyelid positions.

Branching out into cultural comparisons Dr. Birdwhistell found that among the Japanese both sexes were similar in the number of eyelid positions they could reproduce. But even the Japanese could recognize, in others, more positions than they could assume themselves.

When movement of the eyebrows is added to the movement of the lids, many more recognizable signals are produced. Some scientists have found as many as forty different positions of the brows alone, though most agree that less than half of them are significant. It is only when the significant eyebrow movements are combined with the significant lid movements and we add forehead creases that the permutations and combinations are endless.

If each combination has a different implication, then there is no end to the number of signals we can transmit with our eyes and the skin around them.

THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE

by
Edward T. Hall
and
Mildred Reed Hall

THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE*

Until recently, most Americans were largely unaware of the existence, let alone the importance, of non-verbal communication. Yet it is omnipresent in interpersonal situations and affects powerfully our judgments about other people and theirs about us. One of the men who has pioneered in the study of nonverbal communication is anthropologist Edward Hall. In this article, Edward and Mildred Hall discuss the crucial effects that "your posture, gestures, facial expression, costume, the way you walk, even your treatment of time and space and material things" may have, and emphasize the importance of respecting the power and diversity of "the sounds of silence."

Bob leaves his apartment at 8:15 A.M. and stops at the corner drugstore for breakfast. Before he can speak, the counterman says, "The usual?" Bob nods yes. While he savors his Danish, a fat man pushes onto the adjoining stool and overflows into his space. Bob scowls and the man pulls himself in as much as he can. Bob has sent two messages without speaking a syllable.

Henry has an appointment to meet Arthur at 11 o'clock; he arrives at 11:30. Their conversation is friendly, but Arthur retains a lingering hostility. Henry has unconsciously communicated that he doesn't think the appointment is very important or that Arthur is a person who needs to be treated with respect.

George is talking to Charley's wife at a party. There conversation is entirely trivial, yet Charley glares at them suspiciously. Their physical proximity and the movements of their eyes reveal that they are powerfully attracted to each other.

Jose Ybarra and Sir Edmund Jones are at the same party and it is important for them to establish a cordial relationship for business reasons. Each is trying to be warm and friendly, yet they will part with mutual distrust and their business transaction will probably fall through. Jose, in Latin fashion, moved closer and closer to Sir Edmunds they spoke, and this movement was miscommunicated as pushiness to Sir Edmund, who kept backing away from this intimacy, and this was miscommunicated to Jose as coldness. The silent languages of Latin and English cultures are more difficult to learn than their spoken languages.

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In each of these cases, we see the subtle power of nonverbal communication. The only language used throughout most of the history of humanity (in evolutionary terms, vocal communication is relatively recent), it is the first form of communication you learn. You use this perverbal language, consciously and unconsciously, every day to tell other people how you feel about yourself and them. This language includes your posture, gestures, facial expressions, costume, the way you walk, even your treatment of time and space and material things. All people communicate on several different levels at the same time but are usually aware of only the verbal dialogue and don't realize that they respond to nonverbal messages. But when a person says one thing and really believes something else, the discrepancy between the two can usually be sensed. Nonverbal-communication systems are much less subject to the conscious deception that often occurs in verbal systems. When we find ourselves thinking, "I don't know what it is about him, but he doesn't seem sincere," it's usually this lack of congruity between a person's words and his behavior that makes us anxious and uncomfortable.

Few of us realize how much we all depend on body movement in our conversation or are aware of the hidden rules that goven listening behavior. But we know instantly whether or not the person we're talking to is "tuned in" and we're very sensitive to any breach in listening etiquette. In white middle-class American culture, when someone wants to show he is listening to someone else, he looks either at the other person's face or, specifically, at his eyes, shifting his gaze from one eye to the other.

If you observe a person conversing, you'll notice that he indicates he's listening by nodding his head. He also make little "Hmm" noises. If he agrees with what's being said, he may give a vigorous nod. To show pleasure or affirmation, he smiles; if he has some reservations, he looks skeptical by raising an eyebrow or pulling down the corners of his mouth. If a participant wants to terminate the conversation, he may start shifting his body position, stretching his legs, crossing or uncrosssing them, bobbing his foot or diverting his gaze from the speaker. The more he fidgets, the more the speaker becomes aware that he has lost his audience. As a last measure, the listener may look at his watch to indicate the imminent end of the conversation.

Talking and listening are so intricately interwined that a person cannot do one without the other. Even when one is alone and talking to oneself, there is part of the brain that speaks while another part listens. In all conversations, the listener is positively or negatively reinforcing the speaker all the time. He may even guide the conversation without knowing it, by laughing or frowning or dismissing the argument with a wave of his hand.

The language of the eyes--another age-old way of exchanging feelings--is both subtle and complex. Not only do men and women use their eyes differently but there are class, generation, regional, ethnic, and national cultural differences. Americans often complain

about the way foreigners stare at people or hold a glance too long. Most Americans look away from someone who is using his eyes in an unfamiliar way because it makes thems self-conscious. If a man looks at another man's wife in a certain way, he's asking for trouble, as indicated earlier. But he might not be ill mannered or seeking to challenge the husband. He might be a European in this country who hasn't learned our visual mores. Many American women visiting France or Italy are acutely embarrassed because, for the first time in their lives, men really look at them--their eyes, hair, nose, lips, breasts, hips, legs, thighs, knees, ankles, feet, clothes, hairdo, even their walk. These same women, once they have become used to being looked at, often return to the United States and are overcome with the feeling that "No one ever really looks at me anymore."

Analyzing the mass of data on the eyes, it is possible to sort out at least three ways in which the eyes are used to communicate: dominance vs. submission, involvement vs. detachment and positive vs. negative attitude. In addition, there are three levels of consciousness and control, which can be categorized as follows: (1) conscious use of the eyes to communicate, such as the flirting blink and the intimate nose-wrinkling squint; (2) the very extensive category of unconscious but learned behavior governing where the eyes are directed and when (this unwritten set of rules dictates how and under what circumstances the sexes, as well as people of all status categories, look at each other); and (3) the response of the eye itself, which is completely outside both awareness and control--changes in the cast (the sparkle) of the eye and the pupillary reflex.

The eye is unlike any other organ of the body, for it is an extension of the brain. The unconscious pupillary reflex and the cast of the eye have been known by people of Middle Eastern origin for years--although most are unaware of their knowledge. Depending on the context, Arabs and others look either directly at the eyes or deeply into the eyes of their interlocutor. We became aware of this in the Middle East several years ago while looking at jewelry. The merchant suddenly started to push a particular bracelet at a customer and said, "You buy this one." What interested us was that the bracelet was not the one that had been consciously selected by the purchaser. But the merchant, watching the pupils of the eyes, knew what the purchaser really wanted to buy. Whether he specifically knew how he knew is debatable.

A psychologist at the University of Chicago, Eckhard Hess, was the first to conduct systematic studies of the pupillary reflex. His wife remarked one evening, while watching him reading in bed, that he must be very interested in the text because his pupils were dilated. Following up on this, Hess slipped some pictures of nudes into a stack of photographs that he gave to his male assistant. Not looking at the photographs but watching his assistant's pupils, Hess was able to tell precisely when the assistant came to the nudes. In further experiments, Hess retouched

the eyes in a photograph of a woman. In one print, he made the pupils small, in another, large; nothing else was changed. Subjects who were given the photographs found the woman with the dilated pupils much more attractive. Any man who has had the experience of seeing a woman look at him as her pupils widen with reflex speed knows that she's flashing him a message.

The eye-sparkle phenomenon frequently turns up in our interviews of couples in love. It's apparently one of the first reliable clues in the other person that love is genuine. To date, there is no scientific data to explain eye sparkle; no investigation of the pupil, the cornea or even the white sclera of the eye shows how the sparkle originates. Yet we all know it when we see it.

One common situation for most people involves the use of the eyes in the street and in public. Although eye behavior follows a definite set of rules, the rules vary according to the place, the needs and feelings of the people, and their ethnic background. For urban whites, once they're within definite recognition distance (16-32 feet for people with average eyesight), there is mutual avoidance of eye contact--unless they want something specific: a pickup, a handout or information of some kind. In the West and in small towns generally, however, people are much more likely to look at and greet one another, even if they're strangers.

It's permissible to look at people if they're beyond recognition distance; but once inside this sacred zone, you can only steal a glance at strangers. You must greet friends, however; to fail to do so is insulting. Yet, to stare too fixedly even at them is considered rude and hostile. Of course, all of these rules are variable.

A great many blacks, for example, greet each other in public even if they don't know each other. To blacks, most eye behavior of whites has the effect of giving the impression that they aren't there, but this is due to white avoidance of eye contact with anyone in the street.

Another very basic difference between people of different ethnic backgrounds is their sense of territoriality and how they handle space. This is the silent communication, or miscommunication, that caused friction between Mr. Ybarra and Sir Edmund Jones in our earlier example. We know from research that everyone has around himself an invisible bubble of space that contracts and expands depending on several factors: his emotional state, the activity he's performing at the time and his cultural background. This bubble is a kind of mobile territory that he will defend against intrusion. If he is accustomed to close personal distance between himself and others, his bubble will be smaller than that of someone who's accustomed to greater personal distance. People of North European heritage--English, Scandinavian, Swiss and German--tend to avoid contact. Those whose heritage is Italian, French, Spanish, Russian, Latin American or Middle Eastern like close personal contact.

People are very sensitive to any intrusion into their spatial bubble. If someone stands too close to you, your first instinct is to back up. If that's not possible, you lean away and pull yourself in, tensing your muscles. If the intruder doesn't respond to these body signals, you may then try to protect yourself, using a briefcase, umbrella, or raincoat. Women--especially when traveling alone--often plant their pocketbook in such a way that no one can get very close to them. As a last resort, you may move to another spot and position yourself behind a desk or a chair that provides screening. Everyone tries to adjust the space around himself in a way that's comfortable for him; most often, he does this unconsciously.

Emotions also have a direct effect on the size of a person's territory. When you're angry or under stress, your bubble expands and you require more space. New York psychiatrist Augustus Kinzel found a difference in what he calls Body-Buffer Zones between violent and non-violent prison inmates. Dr. Kinzel conducted experiments in which each prisoner was placed in the center of a small room and then Dr. Kinzel slowly walked toward him. Nonviolent prisoners allowed him to come quite close, while prisoners with a history of violent behavior couldn't tolerate his proximity and reacted with some vehemence.

Apparently, people under stress experience other people as looming larger and closer than they actually are. Studies of schizophrenic patients have indicated that they sometimes have a distorted perception of space, and several psychiatrists have reported patients who experience their body boundaries as filling up an entire room. For these patients, anyone who comes into the room is actually inside their body, and such an intusion may trigger a violent outburst.

Unfortunately, there is little detailed information about normal people who live in highly congested urban areas. We do know, of course, that the noise, pollution, dirt, crowding and confusion of our cities induce feelings of stress in most of us, and stress leads to a need for greater space. The man who's packed into a subway, jostled in the street, crowded into an elevator and forced to work all day in a bull pen or in a small office without auditory or visual privacy is going to be very stressed at the end of his day. He needs places that provide relief from constant overstimulation of his nervous system. Stress from overcrowding is cumulative and people can tolerate more crowding early in the day than later; note the increased bad temper during the evening rush hour as compared with the morning melee. Certainly one factor in people's desire to commute by car is the need for privacy and relief from crowding (except, often, from other cars); it may be the only time of the day when nobody can intrude.

In crowded public places, we tense our muscles and hold ourselves stiff, and thereby communicate to others our desire not to intrude on their space and, above all, not to touch them. We also avoid eye contact, and the total effect is that of someone who has

"tuned out." Walking along the street, our bubble expands slightly as we move in a stream of strangers, taking care not to bump into them. In the office, at meetings, in restaurants, our bubble keeps changing as it adjusts to the activity at hand.

Most white middle-class Americans use four main distances in their business and social relations: intimate, personal, social, and public. Each of these distances has a near and a far phase and is accompanied by changes in the volume of the voice. Intimate distance varies from direct physical contact with another person to a distance of six to eighteen inches and is used for our most private activities--caressing another person or making love. At this distance, you are overwhelmed by sensory inputs from the other person--heat from the body, tactile stimulation from the skin, the fragrance of perfume, even the sound of breathing--all of which literally envelop you. Even at the far phase, you're still within easy touching distance. In general, the use of intimate distance in public between adults is frowned on. It's also much too close for strangers, except under conditions of extreme crowding.

In the second zone--personal distance--the close phase is one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half feet; it's at this distance that wives usually stand from their husband in public. If another woman moves into this zone the wife will most likely be disturbed. The far phase--two-and-a-half to four feet--is the distance used to "keep someone at arm's length" and is the most common spacing used by people in conversation.

The third zone--social distance--is employed during business transactions or exchanges with a clerk or repairman. People who work together tend to use close social distance--four to seven feet. This is also the distance for conversations at social gatherings. To stand at this distance from someone who is seated has a dominating effect (e.g., teacher to pupil, boss to secretary). The far phase of the third zone--seven to twelve feet--is where people stand when someone says, "Stand back so I can look at you." This distance lends a formal tone to business or social discourse. In an executive office, the desk serves to keep people at this distance.

The fourth zone--public distance--is used by teachers in classrooms or speakers at public gatherings. At its farthest phase--25 feet and beyond--it is used for important public figures. Violations of this distance can lead to serious complications. During his 1970 U.S. visit, the president of France, Georges Pompidou, was harrassed by pickets in Chicago, who were permitted to get within touching distance. Since pickets in France are kept behind barricades a block or more away, the president was outraged by this insult to his person, and President Nixon was obliged to communicate his concern as well as offer his personal apologies.

It is interesting to note how American pitchmen and panhandlers exploit the unwritten, unspoken conventions of eye and distance. Both take advantage of the fact that once explicit eye contact is established, it is rude to look away, because to do so means to brusquely dismiss the other person and his needs. Once having caught the eye of his mark, the panhandler then locks on, not letting go until he moves through the public zone, the social zone, the personal zone and, finally, into the intimate sphere, where people are most vulnerable.

Touch also is an important part of the constant stream of communication that takes place between people. A light touch, a firm touch, a blow, a caress are all communications. In an effort to break down barriers among people, there's been a recent upsurge in group-encounter activities, in which strangers are encouraged to touch one another. In special situations such as these, the rules for not touching are broken with group approval and people gradually lose some of their inhibitions.

Although most people don't realize it, space is perceived and distances are set not by vision alone but with all the senses. Auditory space is perceived with the ears, thermal space with the skin, kinesthetic space with the muscles of the body, and olfactory space with the nose. And, once again, it's one's culture that determines how his senses are programmed--which sensory information ranks highest and lowest. The important thing to remember is that culture is very persistent. In this country, we've noted the existence of culture patterns that determine distance between people in the third and fourth generations of some families, despite their prolonged contact with people of very different cultural heritages.

Whenever there is a great cultural distance between two people, there are bound to be problems arising from differences in behavior and expectations. An example is the American couple who consulted a psychiatrist about their marital problems. The husband was from New England and had been brought up by reserved parents who taught him to control his emotions and to respect the need for privacy. His wife was from an Italian family and had been brought up in close contact with all the members of her large family, who were extremely warm, volatile and demonstrative.

When the husband came home after a hard day at the office, dragging his feet and longing for peace and quiet, his wife would rush to him and smother him. Clasping his hands, rubbing his brow, crooning over his weary head, she never left him alone. But when the wife was upset or anxious about her day, the husband's response was to withdraw completely and leave her alone. No comforting, no affectionate embrace, no attention--just solitude. The woman became convinced her husband didn't love her and, in desperation, she consulted a psychiatrist. Their problem wasn't basically psychological but cultural.

Why has man developed all these different ways of communicating messages without words? One reason is that people don't like to spell out certain kinds of messages. We prefer to find other ways of showing our feelings. This is especially true in relationships as sensitive as courtship. Men don't like to be rejected and most women don't want to turn a man down bluntly. Instead, we work out subtle ways of encouraging or discouraging each other that save face and avoid confrontations.

How a person handles space in dating others is an obvious and very sensitive indicator of how he or she feels about the other person. On a first date, if a woman sits or stands so close to a man that he is acutely conscious of her physical presence--inside the intimate-distance zone--the man usually construes it to mean that she is encouraging him. However, before the man starts moving in on the woman, he should be sure what message she's really sending; otherwise, he risks bruising his ego. What is close to someone of North European background may be neutral or distant to someone of Italian heritage. Also, women sometimes use space as a way of misleading a man and there are few things that put men off more than women who communicate contradictory messages--such as women who cuddle up and then act insulted when a man takes the next step.

How does a woman communicate interest in a man? In addition to such familiar gambits as smiling at him, she may glance shyly at him, blush and then look away. Or she may give him a real come-on look and move in very close when he approaches. She may touch his arm and ask for a light. As she leans forward to light her cigarette, she may brush him lightly, enveloping him in her perfume. She'll probably continue to smile at him and she may use what ethologists call preening gestures--touching the back of her hair, thrusting her breasts forward, tilting her hips as she stands or crossing her legs if she's seated, perhaps even exposing one thigh or putting a hand on her thigh and stroking it. She may also stroke her wrists as she converses or show the palm of her hand as a way of gaining his attention. Her skin may be unusually flushed or quite pale, her eyes brighter, the pupils larger.

If a man sees a woman whom he wants to attract, he tries to present himself by his posture and stance as someone who is self-assured. He moves briskly and confidently. When he catches the eye of the woman, he may hold her glance a little longer than normal. If he gets an encouraging smile, he'll move in close and engage her in small talk. As they converse, his glance shifts over her face and body. He, too, may make preening gestures--straightening his tie, smoothing his hair, or shooting his cuffs.

How do people learn body language? The same way they learn spoken language--by observing and imitating people around them as they're growing up. Little girls imitate their mothers or an older female. Little boys imitate their fathers or a respected uncle or a character on television. In this way, they learn the gender

signals appropriate for their sex. Regional, class and ethnic patterns of body behavior are also learned in childhood and persist throughout life.

Such patterns of masculine and feminine body behavior vary widely from one culture to another. In America, for example, women stand with their thighs together. Many walk with their pelvis tipped slightly forward and their upper arms close to their body. When they sit, they cross their legs at the knee, or if they are well past middle age, they may cross their ankles. American men hold their arms away from their body, often swinging them as they walk. They stand with their legs apart (an extreme example is the cowboy, with legs apart and thumbs tucked into his belt.) When they sit, they put their feet on the floor with legs apart and, in some parts of the country, they cross their legs by putting one ankle on the other knee.

Leg behavior indicates sex, status and personality. It also indicates whether or not one is at ease or is showing respect or disrespect for the other person. Young Latin-American males avoid crossing their legs. In their world of machismo, the preferred position for young males when with one another (if there is no older dominant male present to whom they must show respect) is to sit on the base of their spine with the leg muscles relaxed and their feet wide apart. Their respect position is like our military equivalent; spine straight, heels and ankles together--almost identical to that displayed by properly brought up young women in New England in the early part of this century.

American women who sit with their legs spread apart in the presence of males are not normally signaling a come-on--they are simply (and often unconsciously) sitting like men. Middle-class women in the presence of other women to whom they are very close may on occasion throw themselves down on a soft chair or sofa and let themselves go. This is a signal that nothing serious will be taken up. Males, on the other hand, lean back and prop their legs up on the nearest object.

The way we walk, similarly, indicates status, respect, mood and ethnic or cultural affiliation. The many variants of the female walk are too well known to go into here, except to say that a man would have to be blind not to be turned on by the way some women walk--a fact that made Mae West rich before scientists ever studied these matters. To white Americans, some French middle-class males walk in a way that is both humorous and suspect. There is a bounce and looseness to the French walk, as though the parts of the body were somehow unrelated. Jacques Tati, the French movie actor, walks this way; so does the great mime, Marcel Marceau.

Blacks and whites in America--with the exception of middle- and upper-middle-class professionals of both groups--move and walk very differently from each other. To the blacks, whites often seem incredibly stiff, almost mechanical in their movements. Black

males, on the other hand, have a looseness and coordination that frequently makes whites a little uneasy; it's too different, too integrated, too alive, too male. Norman Mailer has said that squares walk from the shoulders, like bears, but blacks and hippies walk from the hips, like cats.

All over the world, people walk not only in their own characteristic way but have walks that communicate the nature of their involvement with whatever it is they're doing. The purposeful walk of North Europeans is an important component of proper behavior on the job. Any male who has been in the military knows how essential it is to walk properly (which makes for a continuing source of tension between blacks and whites in the Service). The quick shuffle of servants in the Far East in the old days was a show of respect. On the island of Truk, when we last visited, the inhabitants even had a name for the respectful walk that one used when in the presence of a chief or when walking past a chief's house. The term was sufan, which meant to be humble and respectful.

The notion that people communicate volumes by their gestures, facial expressions, posture and walk is not new; actors, dancers, writers and psychiatrists have long been aware of it. Only in recent years, however, have scientists begun to make systematic observation of body motions. Ray L. Birdwhistell of the University of Pennsylvania is one of the pioneers in body-motion research and coined the term kinesics to describe the field. He developed an elaborate notation system to record both facial and body movements, using an approach similar to that of the linguist, who studies the basic elements of speech. Birdwhitstell and other kinesicists such as Albert Sheflen, Adam Kendon and William Condon take movies of people interacting. They run the film over and over again, often at reduced speed for frame-by-frame analysis, so that they can observe even the slightest body movements not perceptible at normal interaction speeds. These movements are then recorded in notebooks for later analysis.

To appreciate the importance of nonverbal-communication systems, consider the unskilled inner-city black looking for a job. His handling of time and space alone is sufficiently different from the white middle-class pattern to create great misunderstandings on both sides. The black is told to appear for a job interview at a certain time. He arrives late. The white interviewer concludes from his tardy arrival that the black is irresponsible and not really interested in the job. What the interviewer doesn't know it that the black time system (often referred to by blacks as C.P.T.--colored people's time) isn't the same as that of whites. In the words of a black student who had been told to make an appointment to see his professor: "Man, you must be putting me on. I never had an appointment in my life."

The black job applicant, having arrived late for his interview, may further antagonize the white interviewer by his posture and his eye behavior. Perhaps he slouches and avoids looking at the interviewer; to him, this is playing it cool. To the interviewer, however, he may well look shifty and sound uninterested. The interviewer has failed to notice the actual signs of interest and eagerness in the black's behavior, such as the subtle shift in the quality of the voice--a gentle and tentative excitement--an almost imperceptible change in the cast of the eyes and a relaxing of the jaw muscles.

Moreover, correct reading of black-white behavior is continually complicated by the fact that both groups are comprised of individuals--some of whom try to accomodate and some of whom make it a point of pride not to accommodate. At present, this means that many Americans, when thrown into contact with one another, are in the precarious position of not knowing which pattern applies. Once identified and analyzed, nonverbal-communication systems can be taught, like a foreign language. Without this training, we respond to nonverbal communication in terms of our own culture, we read everyone's behavior as if it were our own, and thus we often misunderstand it.

Several years ago in New York City, there was a program for sending children from predominately black and Puerto Rican low-income neighborhood to summer school in a white upper-class neighborhood on the East Side. One morning, a group of young black and Puerto Rican boys raced down the street, shouting and screaming and overturning garbage cans on their way to school. A doorman from an apartment building nearby chased them and cornered one of them inside a building. The boy drew a knife and attacked the doorman. The tragedy would not have occurred if the doorman had been familiar with the behavior of boys from low-income neighborhoods, where such antics are routine and socially acceptable and where pursuit would be expected to invite a violent response.

The language of behavior is extremely complex. Most of us are lucky to have under control one subcultural system--the one that reflects our sex, class, generation and geographic region within the United States. Because of its complexity, efforts to isolate bits of nonverbal communication and generalize from them are in vain; you don't become an instant expert on people's behavior by watching them at cocktail parties. Body language isn't something that's independent of the person, something that can be donned and doffed like a suit of clothes.

Our research and that of our colleagues has shown that, far from being a superficial form of communication that can be consciously manipulated, nonverbal-communication systems are interwoven into the fabric of the personality, and, as sociologist Erving Goffman has demonstrated, into society itself. They are the warp and woof of daily interactions with others and they influence how one expresses oneself, how one experiences oneself as a man or a woman.

Nonverbal communications signal to members of your own group what kind of person you are, how you feel about others, how you'll fit into and work in a group, whether you're assured or anxious, the degree to which you feel comfortable with the standards of your own culture, as well as deeply significant feelings about the self, including the state of your own psyche. For most of us, it's difficult to accept the reality of another's behavioral system. And, of course, none of us will ever become fully knowledgeable of the importance of every nonverbal signal. But as long as each of us realizes the power of these signals, this society's diversity can be a source of great strength rather than a further--and subtly powerful--source of division.

THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

by
The National Drug Abuse Center

THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION*

INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses three perspectives on the process of interpersonal communication. The first section consists of selections from W. Warner Burke's article, "Interpersonal Communication," in which he notes some of the problems that people have in trying to communicate and also discusses a few ways to improve our capabilities as communicators. The second section describes the two levels inherent in any communication, that of content and that of process, and focuses on three aspects of process skills that trainers can use to encourage open, spontaneous behavior. The third section discusses the concept of "feedback": eight feedback rules that can be used to facilitate interpersonal communication, steps to follow in giving feedback, and some common problems that can hinder effective feedback.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal Communication--The Sender

Communication, by definition, involves at least two individuals, the sender and the receiver. Consider yourself, first of all, as the sender of some message. There are certain filters or barriers (internal) which determine whether or not the message is actually transmitted. These barriers may be categorized as follows: (1) Assumptions about yourself--Do I really have something to offer? Do I really want to share the information? Will others really understand? How will the communication affect my self-esteem? (2) Attitudes about the message itself--Is the information valuable? Do I see the information correctly, or understand it well enough to describe it to others? (3) Sensing the receiver's reaction--Do I become aware of whether or not the receiver is actually understanding? Or in other words, can I "sense" from certain cues or reactions by the receiver whether or not we are communicating?

Now consider yourself as the receiver. As a receiver you may filter or not hear aspects (or any aspect for that matter) of a message. Why? Because the message may seem unimportant or too difficult. Moreover, you may be selective in your attention. For example, you may feel that the sender is being redundant, so you quit listening after the first few words. You may be preoccupied with something else. Or your filtering or lack of attention may be due to your past experience with the sender. You may feel that "this guy has never made a point in his life and never will!"

*Adapted from Participant Handbook for Training of Trainers prepared by the National Drug Abuse Center for Training and Resource Development, 1980.

Many times the receiver never makes use of his "third ear." That is, trying to be sensitive to nonverbal communication. The sender's eyes, gestures, and sometimes his overall posture communicate messages that the insensitive listener never receives.

There may be barriers that exist between the sender and the receiver, e.g., cultural differences. Environmental conditions may also cause barriers, e.g., poor acoustics. More common, however, are the differences in frames of reference. For example, there may not be a common understanding of purpose in a certain communication. You may ask me how I'm feeling today. To you the phrase, "How ya doing?" is nothing more than a greeting. However, I may think you really want to know and I may tell you--possibly at length...

There is a fairly small percentage of people who speak articulately and clearly enough to be understood most of the time. Most of us have to work at it, especially when we are attempting to communicate a message which is fairly abstract or when we want to tell something which is quite personal or highly emotional. In sending the message effectively, we must do two things simultaneously, (1) work at finding the appropriate words and emotion to express what we want to say, and (2) continually look for cues from the listener to get some feedback even if we must ask our listener for some.

The Listener

> In considering interpersonal communication, we might, at first thought, think that listening is the easier of the two functions in the process. If we assume, however, that the listener really wants to understand what the speaker is saying, then the process is not all that easy. The basic problem that the listener faces is that he is capable of thinking faster than the speaker can talk. In their Harvard Business Review article, Nichols and Stevens state that the average rate of speech for most Americans is about 125 words per minute. Most of our thinking processes involve words, and our brains can handle many more words per minute than 125. As Nichols and Stevens point out, what this means is that, when we listen, our brains receive words at a very slow rate compared with the brain's capabilties . . .
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> Thus, a fundamental problem the listener must consider in the communicative process is the fact that his brain is capable of responding to a speaker at several different levels simultaneously. Naturally, this can be an asset to the listener rather than a problem. For example, the listener can attend to the non-verbal cues the speaker gives, e.g., facial expression, gesture, or tone of voice, as well as listen to the words themselves.

Besides a highly active brain, an effective listener has another factor to consider in the communicative process. This factor involves the process of trying to perceive what the speaker is saying from his point of view.

The Tendency to Evaluate

According to Carl Rogers, a leading psychotherapist and... researcher, the major barrier to effective communication is the tendency to evaluate... to approve or disapprove the statement or opinion of the other person or group. Suppose someone says to you, "I didn't like what the lecturer had to say." Your typical response will be either agreement or disagreement. In other words, your primary reaction is to evaluate the statement from your own point of view, from your own frame of reference.

Although the inclination to make evaluations is common, it is usually heightened in those situations where feelings and emotions are deeply involved. Thus, the stronger our feelings, the more likely it is that there will be no mutual element in the communication. There will be only two ideas, two feelings, two judgments, missing each other in the heat of the psychological battle.

If having a tendency to evaluate is the major barrier to communication, then the logical gateway to communication is to become an active listener, to listen with understanding. Don't let this simple statement fool you. Listening with understanding means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to see how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference concerning his subject. One word that summarizes this process of listening with understanding is "empathy."

In psychotherapy, for example, Carl Rogers and his associates have found from research that empathic understanding--understanding with a person not about him--is such an effective approach that it can bring about major changes in personality....

Toward More Effective Listening

Some steps the listener can take to improve interpersonal communication have been stated. To summarize and be more explicit, let us consider these steps.

1. Effective listening must be an active process. To make certain that you are understanding what the speaker is saying, you, as the listener, must interact with him. One way to do this is to paraphrase or summarize for the speaker what you think he has said.

2. Attending to nonverbal behavior that the speaker is communicating along with his verbal expression usually helps to understand the oral message more clearly. Often a facial expression or gesture will "tell" you that the speaker feels more strongly about his subject than his words would communicate.

3. The effective listener does not try to memorize every word or fact the speaker communicates, but rather, he listens for the main thought or idea. Since your brain is such a highly effective processor of information, spending your listening time in more than just hearing the words of the speaker can lead to more effective listening. That is, while listening to the words, you can also be searching for the main idea of the message. Furthermore, you can attempt to find the frame of reference for the speaker's message as well as look at what he is saying from his perspective. This empathetic process also includes your attempting to experience the same feeling about the subject as the speaker.

These three steps toward more effective listening seem fairly simple and obvious. But the fact remains that we can't practice these steps very often. Why don't we?

According to Carl Rogers, it takes courage. If you really understand another person in this way, if you are willing to enter his private world and see the way life appears to him without any attempt to make evaluative judgments, you run the risk of being changed yourself. This risk of being changed is one of the most frightening prospects many of us face.

Moreover, when we need to utilize these steps the most, we are likely to use them the least, that is, when the situation involves a considerable amount of emotion. For example, when we listen to a message that contradicts our most deeply held prejudicies, opinions, or convictions, our brain becomes stimulated by many factors other than what the speaker is telling us. When we are arguing with someone, especially about something that is "near and dear" to us, what are we typically doing when the other person is making his point? It's certainly not listening empathetically! We're probably planning a rebuttal to what he is saying, or we're formulating a question which will embarrass the speaker. We may, of course, simply be "tuning him out." How often have you been arguing with someone for 30 minutes or so, and you make what you consider to be a major point, and your "opponent" responds by saying, "But that's what I said 30 minutes ago!"

When emotions are strongest, then, it is most difficult to achieve the frame of reference of the other person or group. Yet it is then that empathy is most needed if communication

is to be established. A third party, for example, who is able to lay aside his own feelings and evaluation, can assist greatly by listening with understanding to each person or group and clarifying the views and attitudes each holds.

When the parties to a dispute realize that they are being understood, that someone sees how the situation seems to them, the statements grow less exaggerated and less defensive, and it is no longer necessary to maintain the attitude, "I am 100% right and you are 100% wrong."

Summary

Effective communication, at least among human beings, is not a one-way street. It involves an interaction between the speaker and the listener. The responsibility for this interaction is assumed by both parties. You as the speaker can solicit feedback and adjust your message accordingly. As a listener, you can summarize for the speaker what you think he has said and continually practice the empathetic process.

One of the joys of life, at least to me, is to know that I have been heard and understood correctly and to know that someone cares enough to try to understand what I have said. I also get a great deal of satisfaction from seeing this same enjoyment on the face of a speaker when he knows I have understood him (Burke, 1969).

MODULE IV
THE CHALLENGING INTERVIEW

MODULE IV

THE CHALLENGING INTERVIEW

By and large, child support workers understand basic concepts of communication theory and interviewing strategies. They recognize to some extent the need to conduct preliminary planning, and know how to employ a variety of techniques to gather information. Most times, they also strive to establish a productive relationship with their interviewees. While ideally, workers always would interview people in a climate of trust and acceptance, in reality, interviewees often anticipate the interview process with anxiety, embarrassment, or fear. In addition, such obstacles as language barriers, physical or mental handicaps, and uncooperative or biased attitudes on the part of the interviewee present great challenges to the interviewer.

TYPES OF CHALLENGING INTERVIEWS

The following section describes a number of interviewing situations that tend to be particularly challenging for the child support interviewer. In addition, possible strategies for dealing with these situations are suggested.

The reluctant interviewee. When an interviewee refuses to divulge information, the interviewer must consider two alternatives. If the interviewee is a custodial relative receiving public assistance, he or she may be removed from the grant for non-cooperation. The interviewer needs to inform him or her of this. (See Module I.) However, the interviewer also needs to determine why the interviewee is reluctant to speak. In cases where "good cause" can be established, an interviewee may not be obliged to divulge certain information (See Module I.) To help determine the reason for the interviewee's reluctance to speak, the interviewer should pose questions or make comments designed to establish empathy. Some of the comments might be:

- "I believe that you have trouble talking about this. Let's talk about the purpose of this interview and what you hope will happen as a result."
- "Let me tell you what the possibilities are if we have your full cooperation in this matter."
- "Your reluctance to cooperate may affect the judges of the court. Although I cannot promise you specific results, I can tell you that non-cooperative parents have been dealt with in the following manner."

- "If you were me, what would you conclude if a person refused to talk about ____?"

The physically disabled interviewee. The physically disabled interviewee may need to be treated with some extra care. It is necessary for the worker to be respectful, but not patronizing. Strategies for dealing with the handicapped interviewee include the following:

- Meet the interviewee at a location that is most convenient for him or her. Consider a home interview if access to the office poses a problem.

- Thoroughly plan the interview, so that the interview will be comprehensive, thus eliminating the need for additional visits.

The mentally handicapped interviewee. Certain individuals may have been designated as mentally handicapped by the State, and will have been assigned a social worker in the human resources department. The social worker will be responsible for supplying the child support worker with information on collecting child support. Should a handicapped individual approach the child support worker, the worker should rely on the directive approach to interviewing.

The embarrassed interviewee. Again, the interviewer must try to determine the reasons for the reluctance on the part of the interviewee. The interviewer may consider employing the following strategies:

- Ask one of the following questions: "Would you feel more comfortable with the door closed? door open? with the other person (parent, neighbor, family member) absent? with the other person here?"

- Focus on the advantages to the child of the interviewee's cooperation.

The hostile interviewee. The child support worker may learn from the activity sheet that he or she will be interviewing a hostile individual. In other situations, he or she may be caught completely offguard. While the inteviewer needs to try to determine the underlying reason for hostility towards the encounter, he or she also needs to dispel it, if possible. Some strategies for diffusing hostility include the following:

- Let the person fret and fume. This airing of temper and frustration may help the interviewee realize that some will listen to him or her.

- Don't be stupid. Do not put yourself in a potentially dangerous position by meeting a possible dangerous person after hours or away from the office. If such a meeting must be arranged, conduct it in a public place, such as a public library. Have a coworker accompany you.

- Let the inteviewee know that you are not defenseless. The interviewer may need to ask: "Is your situation going to be helped by your being arrested for violating the peace?" Above all, the interviewer should strive to maintain an atmosphere of calm and reason in this situation both for him or herself, and for the well being of others in the agency.

- Stress the role of the interview in the entire process, so that the interviewee gets a clearer understanding of why his or her presence is required.

- The interviewee may be hostile because of the lack of assistance he or she is receiving in other areas, such as housing, employment, emergency shelter, food stamps, and so forth. The child support worker may be able to alleviate tension by sharing information about agencies handling these matters.

The illiterate interviewee. The worker may need to use alternative interviewing techniques, such as asking more direct, closed questions (see Module III). The worker must be certain that the interviewee understands the reasons for the interview, the need for the information, and the exact nature of the specific question. The interviewee must understand the implications of noncompliance, as well as the possible benefits.

- The interviewee should be notified by telephone or by face-to-face contact, so that illiteracy is not used as an excuse for failing to appear.

- Review your data while the interviewee is still in the interview site, asking that he or she place his or her mark on the document.

The interviewee with language differences. Again, the interviewee must understand the nature of the interview and the reason for the information requested. Keep in mind the following when interviewing this type of interviewee:

- Suggest that the interviewee bring someone that he or she trusts--a relative or friend to interpret and clarify.

- Consider using one individual regularly to interpret for your office.

- Using different questioning techniques, review the information you have with the interviewee.

- Explain what kinds of questions you will be asking before you ask them, and explain why you need to know that information.

- Recognize their value system's importance to them.

The intoxicated or substance-abusive interviewee. The interviewer may suspect that an interviewee is a substance- or alcohol-abuser, from reviewing the activity sheet. A strategy for dealing with this interviewee might be:

- Do not attempt to conduct the interview if the interviewee appears under the influence. Do secure location information.

- Reschedule the interview and state the implications of non-compliance. Followup on the rescheduled appointment, with documentation.

The forgetful interviewee. The interviewee has forgotten how, when, and why incidents occurred. Proceed as follows:

- Attempt to determine if this is a ploy.

- Remind the interviewee the purpose of the interview.

- Refer to the child's interest.

- Ask probing questions.

- When trying to determine sexual activity, use references to social events or holidays that will jog the client's memory.

The protective custodial relative. Workers may have to interview young adults whose older relatives accompany them. Keep in mind the following:

- The worker should talk to the interviewee individually and determine how cooperative the interviewee is.

- With cooperative interviewees, the worker can appeal to the relative's understanding the need for privacy as well as securing the most accurate information for the child's support.

- With uncooperative interviewees, the worker can say that because the questions are personal, perhaps the relative(s) or interviewer would be embarrassed.

- Workers must carefully record the information given by the interviewee, not by the relative.

- If the relative provides information, use repetition and address the interviewee by turning more towards him/her, leaning forward, and looking at the interviewee rather than the relative.

- Explain the purpose of the interview, and what is likely to happen as a result of the information to reassure the interviewee and relative.

The "I don't know" interviewee. Certain interviewees may respond to all questions with "I don't know." Workers must determine if this is a lack of knowledge or lack of cooperation. Some suggestions are:

- State the possible consequences of noncooperation.

- Use nonverbal feedback to indicate suspicion of the lack of knowledge--scowling, for example.

- Use information from other sources--coworkers, friends, relatives--to prepare jogging and probing questions.

- Ask "What do you remember?"

The emotional interviewee. A crying interviewee may be an extremely good actor or actress or a terribly frightened, anxious, or frustrated one. The worker must first determine the sincerity of the emotionalism. Suggestions to the worker include:

- Leave the area for a minute. Give the interviewee an opportunity to regain composure.

- Ignore the tears and proceed with the questions, especially if you doubt the sincerity of the emotion.

- Explain the purpose of the interview, reassuring the interviewee that cooperation is all that is asked.

- Stress the possible positive outcomes.

The manipulative interviewee. Interviewees may attempt to intimidate the worker by stressing friendship with the judge or status in the community. The worker should consider the following:

- Invite the interviewee to discuss the situation with power figures.
- Point out the legal ramifications of noncompliance, which the interviewer can get the judge's input on.
- Also point out that the interviewee is publicizing his or her situation, which may be embarrassing to him or her, while the worker is required to maintain confidentiality.
- Be comfortable with your own authority.

While these types of interviews and others test the interviewer, they also can contribute greatly to feelings of satisfaction. By using the techniques suggested in Module III--different questioning techniques, verbal and nonverbal feedback,--plus appropriate planning for the interview, as well as understanding the nature of the interview process itself, the worker will deal with these interviews as challenging to his or her ability. Furthermore, by processing the interview results immediately after the interview (see Module V), the worker will have the opportunity to identify what behavior he or she exhibited that affected the responsiveness of the interviewee.

MODULE IV
SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

THE REASONS FOR DIALECT DIFFERENCES

by
Paul Roberts

THE REASONS FOR DIALECT DIFFERENCES*

The following excerpt from Discovering American Dialects by Roger W. Shuy considers the contributing influences of settlement, population shift, and physical geography on the patterned behavior of American dialects. Have any of these factors discussed by Professor Shuy had a marked effect on your area of the country?

THE PATTERNS OF SETTLEMENT HISTORY

Recently I was driving through the rural Midwest with some friends from California, who noticed things which I had always taken for granted. One Californian, for example, was struck by what he called "little red lollipops" in the front yards of the farmhouse. Later, when he saw another one and called my attention to it, I saw only a red reflector on a stick, used by Indianans as a guide to their driveways at night. My guests were also impressed with poppies growing along the roadside and the quaint country grocery stores with cases of empty soft drink bottles stacked near the front steps. If one grows up in an area in which people usually say "quarter to four," a different by equally common expression, "quarter till four," may seem as strange as the little red lollipops seemed to my friend.

Whether we realize it or not, our language is influenced by the people who settled and established our area. The influence of the early settlers may remain strong for many years; for example, German pronunciations and vocabulary are still found in Grundy County, Illinois; the linguistic effects of the Irish are present on Beaver Island in Lake Michigan; the Dutch influences, in Holland and Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Briticisms, in many American communities which were settled directly from England (such as Albion, Illinois, and New Harmony, Indiana). The first large migration of English people to our country came chiefly from the southeastern counties of England, but there were also some families from Yorkshire, Lancashire, and even the counties farther north. Each of these counties in England has its own local dialects, and the settlers brought these dialects to the New World with them. Later, Ulster Scots, Palatinate Germans, Dutchmen, and others brought features of their own languages or dialects to America, and remnants of these may be clearly seen over one hundred years later.

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Sometimes we find a relatively small dialect area surrounded by another, larger one; the former is called a dialect "island." A good example roughly includes parts of northwestern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin. This lead mining region was settled in the 1850's primarily by people from the Ohio River area, especially Kentucky. Traveling to the region on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, these Midland people and some immigrant Cornishmen formed the nucleus of the Lead Region population. To this day, Midland speech predominates here, even though people in all the surrounding areas of both states use Northern speech. Note, too, that this "island" has no regard for political boundaries; it spreads over parts of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

Local settlement history, a study often neglected, is vital to the dialectologist as he or she begins his or her research. Sometimes he or she can even supply "missing links" to settlement histories by observing and analyzing speech; for example, a Midwestern area with dialect features usually found in New England is quite likely to have been settled by New Englanders.

The current dialect, although useful, is not a foolproof guide to settlement history, for later years of settlement may tend to cancel out earlier speech characteristics.

The first American settlers, of course, came from England. At the time of the earliest settlements in Massachusetts, Virginia, Maryland, and Rhode Island, dialect differences in England were even greater than they are today--and today they are still more striking than ours. Speakers of these various dialects crossed the Atlantic Ocean and settled, dialect and all, on the eastern coast of America. The various colonies of the New World found communication very difficult, and the mixed dialects of English settlers who inhabited each colony gradually became distinctive in themselves. The infrequent visits from "outsiders," the lack of safe and efficient transportation methods, and the tendency of each colony to act as a social unit did much to make their dialects distinctive. To this day, the eastern coast of our country has smaller and more clearly defined dialect areas than does almost any region to the west.

PATTERNS OF POPULATION SHIFT

Ask almost anyone what the dialects of America are, and you probably will be told that they are Southern, Eastern, and General American (meaning Midwestern and Western). Even though some textbooks encourage this notion, Americans simply are not divided that neatly. Nor are regional dialects organized along state lines, as we have already seen. There is simply no such thing as a single New York, Ohio, or Florida dialect; the dialects of these and other states are formed along the lines of population shift. Nor do national borders necessarily mark dialect (or, for that matter, language) differences. The U.S.-Canadian border has been crossed many times by immigrants from both nations. One interesting example of this movement occurred during the Civil

War when groups of New Englanders, hoping to avoid conscription, felt the urge to move the New Brunswick. Such immigrants were referred to as Skedaddlers, and to this day one of their settlements is known locally as Skedaddlers Ridge.

Since the American population shift generally has been from east to west, dialect boundaries are more apt to run horizontally than vertically. People from, say western New York who moved to Michigan, Wisconsin, northern Illionois, and northern Ohio took their western New York dialect with them.

Population shift is affected by the opening of new travel routes, by the invention of new means of transportation, by the development of industry, and by other aspects of American history. And speech patterns are thus moved and changed. For instance, the steamboat ushered in a whole new concept of American migration, allowing New Englanders and the more recent immigrants to move west across the Great Lakes.

The effects of population shift caused by industrialization can be seen in cities like Akron, Ohio. This area was settled later than most urban areas of Ohio because it is located on a high spot (Summit County) just south of the general migration route through Cleveland and just north of the route through Columbus. When the rubber industry began to develop, Akron drew thousands of laborers from the handiest source of labor: southern Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky. The tremendous in-pouring of Midlanders has had such a noticeable effect on the speech of Akronites that, despite its Northern location, Akron might well be considered part of the Midland speech area. The migration of Midlanders, especially West Virginians, in the past twenty years is also clearly evident in the Cleveland area, where it is estimated that Cuyahoga County has received 150,000 migrants from other states since World War II. Professor Raven I. McDavid, Jr. of the University of Chicago has observed that Kentucky and West Virginia, like western New England in our country's eariler days, have the two qualities necessary for emigration: a high fertility in the population and a low fertility in the soil.

Along with mention of the shift in the population, we must also note the development of urban prestige. Cities like New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and San Francisco have acquired a certain prestige and have become culturally influential. Of course, no one city dominates American culture or American speech; a combination of factors causes Americans to use regional forms rather than a "national" pattern of speech.

One such factor is found in the very size of our country. It is simply too large for one city to develop a network of influence over every other city. If such an influence had ever existed, today we would most likely be imitating the speech of New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., or some other city significant in our nation's history.

Democracy also affects the thinking of Americans. If we should be told suddenly that we should pattern our speech, dress, buying habits, religion, and political views after those of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, most of us would react violently. Why Cedar Rapids? The spirit of American regionalism may be seen in people from almost any area of the country. The most traditional example might be a Texan, whose loyalty is notorious. But it can also be seen in the regional loyalty of the natives of Washington State, the Great Lakes area, and New England. This feeling is encouraged by local businessmen whose constant plea is "Buy local products," and by the pressures of family life which cause people to take local jobs rather than to move to some other part of the country.

As a result of this loyalty, various urban areas become focal points in the culture, including the dialect, of a given area. Pronunciations, words, and even grammatical choices of a city are often copied, consciously or subconsciously, by people around it. The influence of Chicago speech patterns can be clearly seen as far west as Wheaton, Illinois (twenty-five miles from Chicago), for example, where such characteristic Chicago words as prairie (for vacant lot) and clout (political influence) are known. The spread of the Minneapolis influence into Wisconsin was recently noted by Frederic G. Cassidy, who observed that the Minneapolis term rubber-binder (for rubber band) was gaining across the state line. On the other hand, the exact influence of an urban area is difficult to judge. The mere presence of a word or pronunication in the city and its surrounding area does not guarantee that the primary influence came from the city. The flat farm land west of Chicago was actually settled before that city began its phenomenal growth, and it is difficult to sort out the influences of both areas. William Labov has recently observed that lower income New York City residents often ridicule their own speech. The prounciations dis and dese (for this and these) are thought of as characteristic of lower social levels and are not highly valued.

More recent immigration patterns also have had their influence on American English. There can be little doubt about the impact of foreign languages in the past century. The influence of German settlers on the vocabulary and syntax of certain parts of Pennsylvania has long been recognized; likewise, one can easily find Polish terms in Detroit, Hungarian in Cleveland, and Spanish in Los Angeles. New People bring new customs and, quite frequently, new ways of expressing them. Other aspects of American history have also contributed to the dialect mixtures of the present day. Many of our earlier settlements in the Rocky Mountains, for example, dissolved along with the mines which attracted the settlers in the first place. Similarly, those early eastern Coloradans who tried the wrong farming techniques soon moved to other parts, taking their direct heritage with them and leaving the dust bowl behind.

PATTERNS OF PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

Today we are seldom hindered in our travels by physical barriers such as rivers, deserts, or mountains. Bridge building, improved water travel, earthmoving techniques, and air transportation have removed most of the barriers which hampered communications and population shift in the last century. Consequently, dialect differences which are found on opposite sides of a river, a mountain range, or a desert were probably established many years ago. In more recently settled areas we find the influences of physical geography less important; however, there are some recent examples of cultural and linguistic isolation. Until about forty years ago river transportation was almost the only way for residents of Calhoun County, Illinois, to travel outside the county to Alton, Illinois, for a distance of about one hundred miles. Likewise Leslie County, Kentucky had only one paved road as recently as ten years ago. This type of isolation can be seen today in parts of eastern Kentucky and southern Virginia, and more examples might be found in many other states.

In the East, rivers, mostly, because they were early physical barriers, are rather clear markers of dialect areas. The Connecticut River still separates "pahk the cah" from park the car. As far west as Illinois, the prairie south of the Rock River and north of the Illinois River provided easy access for the settlement of Yankees who came to Illinois across the Great Lakes and Midlanders who came north by way of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. Today this prairie area contains a mixture of Northern and Midland dialects. West of the Mississippi, however, geographical barriers are seldom important, since settlement often developed along with the railroad or even followed it, instead of being determined by water routes and boundaries.

MODULE V
PROCESSING INTERVIEW RESULTS

MODULE V

PROCESSING INTERVIEW RESULTS

As we discuss in Module II, a good interview does not commence when the interviewee appears on the scene, but rather, when the worker goes through the planning stage. The same holds true for termination of the interview. The interview does not end when the interviewee leaves the scene, but rather, after the worker has processed the interview. Two major tasks that are performed by the worker in the processing stage are the recording of the information obtained during the interview and the evaluation of the interview itself. Because these two functions are crucial components of the interviewing process, the worker needs to take the time after each individual interview to perform these tasks.

EVALUATION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of the interview by the worker helps him or her understand why the interview went as it did. As Alfred Kadushin, states in The Social Work Interview: "The interview is not ended until the interviewer recapitulates the encounter in his mind and attempts to assess his performance critically. There are a number of questions that the interviewer may want to ask of himself in marking such an evaluation."/1/ Listed below are twelve questions that Alfred Kadushin considers to be appropriate for an interviewer to ask in order to make a self-assessment. Accompanying each question is an analysis of its relevancy to the interviewer in the child support program.

1. In retrospect, what were the purposes of this interview for the interviewee, for the agency?

   The child support program conducts interviews for many reasons, including the following: to find if an applicant/recipient is eligible for assistance, to gather information for location purposes, or to enforce a child support order. One common misunderstanding among child support interviewees is that this purpose of the interview is to apply for assistance. The interviewer not only is interested in eligibility information but also in the possiblity of gathering information to facilitate paternity establishment. To avoid misunderstanding or conflict, and to enhance the likelihood that he or she will gather useful information, the interviewer should explain to the interviewee the purpose of the program, in general, and the interview, in particular, before the interview commences.

2. To what extent were the purposes achieved?

   Purposes can be looked at in terms of goals. Whether the interviewer fulfilled all the interview purposes, or only some of them, he or she can evaluate the degree to which the interview was successful. Here again, the

purposes of both the interviewer and interviewees need to be considered. Often, both parties' purposes can be met, even though they are different.

3. What interventions helped to achieve the purposes? What interventions hindered the achievement?

   Interventions normally are looked at in a negative fashion. It is easy to identify negative interventions, like telephone calls or interruptions, that occur during interviews. While they are not common, positive interventions also exist. For example, the interviewer may discover a more conducive interviewing environment that the one normally used, because that one was temporarily unavailable. Avoidance of past negative interventions and implementations of past positive interventions will improve the interviewer's achievement of purpose in future interviews.

4. What was my feeling about the interviewee?

5. At what point was my feeling most positive? Most negative?

6. How might these feelings have been manifested in what I said or did?

   These three questions are related; each forces the interviewer to analyze biases or prejudices that he or she may have. While it may not be possible to eliminate these feelings, the interviewer may be able to filter them appropriately if he or she can recognize them. Analysis of feelings about the interviewee can facilitate the recognition of barriers that were created by the interviewer. This self-examination can help the interviewer to calculate how much of his or her feelings affected the failure or success of the interview, and to determine how to control these feelings in the future.

7. What seemed to be the reaction of the interviewee to the interview?

   This question helps the interviewer to evaluate responses made by the interviewee. Recalling verbal and nonverbal communication, such as voice and body language, on the interviewee's part can provide good clues to responses that the interviewee may have made. The interviewer should take that into consideration.

8. When did the interview seem to falter? When did it proceed smoothly?

   Many factors may be considered to analyze the interview as a whole. A change in the environmental conditions,

the line of questioning, or sudden interventions are a few examples. Recall of these factors can enable an interviewer to assess how they helped or hindered the interview, and to capitalize on strong points in the future.

9. At what point did the interviewee show signs of resistance, irritation? What had I said or done just prior to that?

   The interviewee may show signs of resistance or irritation for many reasons. Perhaps he or she was reluctant to give the information that was requested. Another possibility is that the interviewer projected him- or herself in a negative manner. It may be that the type or level of language, or the body language employed by the interviewer was misinterpreted or inappropriate. This can cause resistance on the part of the interviewee. If the interviewer recalls the point at which resistance was displayed, he or she may be able to analyze why it occurred and correct the cause.

10. At what point did it cease to be an interview and become a conversation, a discussion, or argument?

    The interviewer may be able to determine why this interview became a conversation, discussion, or argument by recalling and analyzing the point at which it happened. This enables the interviewer to assess his or her techniques for controlling the interview.

11. If I had the opportunity to conduct the interview over again, what changes would I make? What justifies the changes?

12. What, in general, did this interview teach me about myself as an interviewer?

    These last two questions are related; each asks the interviewer to review the questions that he or she already has answered. With this review, the interviewer may understand more fully what he or she has learned, and how that learning will be implemented in the future.

This exercise helps the worker to identify the strengths and weaknesses of his or her interviewing techniques. It should be viewed as a learning tool. To use it most effectively, the interviewer must be honest with him or herself; otherwise, the validity of the self-evaluation is forfeited.

RECORDING THE INFORMATION: FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The child support agency can obtain a new case in one of three ways: (1) referral from the welfare agency*, (2) non-public assistance applicant, and (3) referral from another State or jurisdiction. When a new case is obtained through a referral from the welfare agency, an interview already has been completed with the applicant/ recipient. The thoroughness of the interview varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but in many cases, the welfare agency conducts the initial interview not only to determine eligibility, but also to gather information to facilitate the establishment of a court order for support. This interview commonly know as the intake interview, is discussed below./2/

Intake. Often the child support agencies develop an intake form to be used by the welfare agency in obtaining required information since the agency will use the form for location purposes, establishment of a court order, and maintaining the case record. It is a Federal requirement that the welfare agency provide prompt notice**, including a copy of the AFDC case record, or all relevant information, as prescribed by the child support agency. Federal requirements not only mandate that the welfare agency's referral be done within 2 working days, but also that the child support agency can require the welfare agency to collect whatever information the child support agency finds pertinent.

From the child support agencies' perspective, the information to open a case includes:

- Information on the applicant/recipient and children
- Information on the absent parent
- Assignment of support rights.

Information on the applicant includes: name, social security number, address, telephone number, childrens' names and ages and the name of the father of each, status of paternity of each, current or previous court orders. Information on the absent parent includes: name, social security number, home address, work address, work history, marital status, childrens' name and ages, military history, income, resources, bank accounts, real or personal property, debts, existence of multiple files, and names of relatives and friends.

*Welfare agency is used to describe the agency which administers the AFDC program which is Title IV-A of the Social Security Act.

**Prompt notice means written notice within 2 working days of the furnishing of aid including, a copy of the AFDC case record, or all relevant information as prescribed by the child support agency. The title IV-A agency and the child support agency may agree to provide notice immediately upon the filing of an application for assistance.

Once the child support agency receives the appropriate forms from the welfare agency, (or when the non-public assistance client has requested the service of the child support program) the case record must be established. This consists of compiling the data received from the welfare agency or the client along with other information available in the child support agency (such as a previous case history) into a case folder. If the welfare agency transmits information on applicants prior to eligibility determination, there should be a verification of eligibility before work proceeds on the case. Once the case folder is developed, the case should be entered into either a computerized or a manual system for tracking. The information received from the welfare agency should be reviewed for thoroughness and completeness. Contact with the welfare agency or the custodial relative may be necessary if significant data are lacking. If this becomes the rule rather than an exception, a meeting should be held between officials of the two agencies to discuss the legal requirement of providing timely case information to the child support agency.

Maintenance of case records. Once sufficient data is obtained to establish a case in the system, there are Federal requirements for the case on maintenance of the records. The elements of a case record which must be kept up to date are contained in 45 CFR 303.2 and are as follows:

- The referral document or documents received from the IV-A agency or the application for IV-D services of any other individuals
- A record of any contacts with an applicant or recipient of assistance under Title IV-A who is required to cooperate, the date and reason therefor, and the results of such contact
- A record of any contacts with an individual who has applied for services, the date and reason therefore and the results of such contact
- A record of any contacts with the absent parent, the date and reason therefor and the results of such contact
- A record of efforts to utilize local locate resources and the dates and results of these efforts
- A record of efforts to utilize State locate resources and the dates and results of these efforts
- A record identifying the court order or, if there is no court order, the calculation of the amount of the obligation utilizing the formula prescribed in the State plan

- A record of any actions taken and the dates and results thereof

- A record of communication to and from the State or local agency administering the State's title IV-A plans

- A record of communications to and from any other IV-D agencies

- A record of communications to and from the Regional Office and the Federal PLS

- A notation in the case record of the closing of the case, the date thereof, and the reason for taking the action.

The purpose of these detailed requirements is to specify the minimum information needed in developing an enforceable case. Eventually, someone may need to appear in court to enforce payment of child support on every located case when there is ability to pay. The question then becomes when is the appropriate information acquired so that the State will prevail in a contested case.

Experience has shown that when case information is recorded routinely, the agency is better able to enforce any order spontaneously. This adds to the agency's credibility with absent parents when delinquencies occur. Rapid enforcement conditions the absent parent to avoid the inconvenience of a court appearance. This process eventually will result in a reduction of court appearances. Therefore, an effective measure to reduce court backlogs is to maintain thorough and current case files which will enable agencies to prepare convincing cases and to take timely enforcement measures.

Safeguarding information. Accompanying the power given to the child support program by legislation is an obligation not to abuse this power. One area which is extemely sensitive is safeguarding information. Citizens of this country have a right to privacy. The agency must take all steps necessary to ensure that the very sensitive information they gather to prepare a case is acquired and used only for the intended purpose.

As described in 45 CFR 302.18, the child support enforcement agency must establish criteria in accordance with State stuatutes which impose legal sanctions on the misuse or improper disclosure of information concerning applicants or recipients of child support services. In addition to child support related activities, case information may be used for the following activities:

- Any investigation, prosecution, or criminal or civil proceeding conducted in connection with the administration of any such plan or program

- The administration of any other Federal or federally-assisted program which provides assistance, in cash or in kind, or services, directly to individuals on the basis of need.

These safeguards also prohibit disclosure to any committee or legislative body (Federal, State, or local) of any information that identifies by name or address any such applicant or recipient.

In addition to recognizing the confidentiality of the information gathered, the child support interviewer needs to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant detail. Especially when such highly personal matters as sexual relationships are at issue, the interviewer should gather information only if and when it actually is required to process a case. For example, information about sexual habits, menstrual cycles, etc. is needed to obtain a court adjudication of paternity, but not when the absent parent already is legally acknowledged as the father. In order to prevent excessive sensitive questioning, some jurisdictions have developed two separate questionnaire forms. (See Figure V-1 and V-2 for samples.) The first form, called the standard intake form, is used with every case. The second, which is referred to as the Confidential Paternity Questionnaire, is used by the interviewer only in cases when paternity needs to be established.

Regardless of what the purpose is for each interview conducted, the interviewer should be aware of all Federal requirements that apply to the interviewer. Knowledge of the requirements will protect both the interviewer and the interviewee. Application of the requirements also will help standardize the interviewing function and increase productivity.

RECORDING THE INFORMATION: THE FORMS

There are many forms used to record information needed in cases of child support and paternity. Although the format and number of forms which are used may vary between different State and local programs, essentially the same information is sought and documented. Some forms are basically questionnaires used to record large quantities of information in an easily retrieveable manner. Other documents are designed for automated system uses, and still others allow the child support worker to document analyses of information obtained. The following section will outline three of the more commonly used forms that are contained in the case file and will give a brief description of the purpose of the individual document and a listing of the kinds of information that might be included on each one.

The intake form. The intake form is used by interviewers to record information gathered during the initial contact with a client. This form contains the basic information upon which a case develops and generally contains such data as the following:

- Information on the custodial relative

  --Full legal name including maiden name, if applicable

  --Date of birth

  --Sex, race, Social Secuirty number

  --Address (both residential and mailing, if different)

  --Telephone number (work and home)

- Information on the child(ren)

  --Full legal name

  --Date of birth

  --Sex, race

  --Legal status of paternity establishment

  --Legal status of order of support

- Information on absent parent

  --Full legal name

  --Date of birth

  --Social Security number

  --Sex, race

  --Documentation of absence from the home

  --Verification of death, incarceration, institutionalization, military, etc., if appropriate

  --Address (current or last known)

  --Work history (current or past employment)

  --Marital status

  --List of all known children

  --Relatives

--Friends

--Financial status

--All other assets such as bank accounts, property, etc.

--Court orders to pay child support (location of court, amount of payment, payment history, method of payment)

--Voluntary agreements to pay child support

--Contacts and relationships with custodial parent and/or children

--Voluntary admission of paternity

The case activity sheet. This form is used by the interviewer to document all activity on the case. It reflects all contacts, correspondence, and activities which reveal the case development. In addition to actual data collected, this form is frequently used by the interviewer or case worker to report additional information which is relevant to communicating and working with all principals involved. By including reports of cooperation, noncooperation, reluctance, or hostility, subsequent contacts with the parties involved can be more effective because the case worker can be better prepared and know what should always be confined to a reporting of what actually happened rather than the workers assessment or judgment of a particular incident or demonstrated behavior. By limiting entries to this kind of reporting, the case worker is protected from accusations of bias, slander, or prejudice, and yet the case record contains valuable information to be used in subsequent contacts or necessary actions. Case activity sheets are usually done in a dialogue format and may include the following kinds of information:

- Records of all phone calls
- Records of office contacts
- Dates and nature of correspondence sent or received
- Negotiations concerning support payments or arrearages
- Court activities and findings
- Appointments kept or broken
- Responses and reactions of parties in a case

For a sample of a case activity sheet, see Figure V-3.

The payment sheet. Payments of current child support obligations and payments on arrearages are usually recorded on payment sheets, ledger sheets, or computer printouts. These may be updated manually or by using an automated system for reporting. These forms provide a readily available accounting of payment status and may include entries which indicate the following information:

- Amount of ongoing monthly support obligation
- Amount of arrearage accrued as the result of nonpayment or irregular payments
- Date payment is due
- Dates payments have been made
- Court or office to which payments are directed
- Identifying information about the payor
- Identifying information about the children for whom payments are made.

Correspondence. Copies of all correspondence either sent or received by the child support office should be included in the case file. They are generally filed in chronological order with the most recent letters secured on top for quick review. Letters which may be included are those received from custodial parents, absent parents, attorneys, employers, courts, other agencies or any other parties related to a particular child support case. These letters provide verification of contacts and activities as well as indicating the development of the case history.

Case files and their contents should be viewed as enforcement tools, since many cases require litigation for matters of either paternity establishment or support collection. The accuracy and completeness of the file contents largely influence actions that can be taken and the success with which a case may be resolved. Conscientious documentation of case activities and thorough recording of information either sought or gathered will contribute to a more productive program and will be reflected by increased financial returns for time and energy invested.

FOOTNOTES

/1/ Alfred Kadushin, The Social Work Interview.

/2/ See also Establishing An Enforceable Case: A Self-Instructional Course. The National Institute for Child Support Enforcement, Office of Child Support Enforcement, forthcoming.

FIGURE V-1: INTAKE FORM*

FAILURE TO PROVIDE REPORT
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
111 NORTH MARKET STREET
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA 95113
TELEPHONE: 299-9700

THIS INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL AND IS USED ONLY BY THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IN ENFORCEMENT OF THE SUPPORT LAWS.

IMPORTANT: OUR HANDLING OF YOUR CASE DEPENDS UPON THE INFORMATION WHICH YOU GIVE US ON THIS FORM. ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION REQUESTED MUST BE PROVIDED. GET HELP FROM OTHERS WHERE NECESSARY. IF AT ALL POSSIBLE GIVE DEFENDANT'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER--IT CAN BE SECURED FROM PAYCHECK STUBS, FORMER EMPLOYERS, COPIES OF TAX RETURNS, ETC. ANSWER EVERY APPLICABLE QUESTION IN FULL--IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER, PRINT "DON'T KNOW". COMPLETE BOTH PAGES. PRINT --DO NOT WRITE.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
DA NUMBER
DSS NUMBER

1 COMPLAINANT (PERSON HAVING PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF CHILDREN.) | RELATIONSHIP TO CHILDREN | DEFENDANT (ABSENT PARENT)

2 DATE OF LAST NON-SUPPORT COMPLAINT, IF ANY. | WHERE WAS IT MADE? COUNTY STATE | ☐ DISTRICT ATTORNEY ☐ SOCIAL SERVICES DEPT.

DEFENDANT (Absent Parent)

3 NAME LAST FIRST MIDDLE | OTHER NAME KNOWN BY

4 HOME ADDRESS NUMBER & STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE | PHONE NUMBER

5 RACE ☐ BLACK ☐ INDIAN ☐ WHITE ☐ ORIENTAL ☐ OTHER: | DESCRIPTION SEX HAIR EYES HEIGHT WEIGHT

6 DISTINGUISHING MARKS, SCARS, AMPUTATIONS, TATTOS, ETC. | BIRTHDATE | BIRTHPLACE

7 LAST KNOWN ADDRESS NUMBER & STREET CITY STATE | DATE FROM: TO:

8 PERSON WHO WOULD ALWAYS KNOW DEFENDANT'S WHEREABOUTS. NAME | PHONE NUMBER
RELATIONSHIP ADDRESS

9 KNOWN ASSOCIATES AND PLACES FREQUENTED. (USE EXTRA SHEET IF NECESSARY)

10 IF WHEREABOUTS IS UNKNOWN, WHERE WAS DEFENDANT LAST SEEN? | WHEN (APPROXIMATE)

11 ABSENT PARENT'S PROBLEMS (IF ANY):
☐ DRINKING ☐ DRUGS ☐ GAMBLING ☐ OTHER:

12 ARRESTS
WHERE? DATE REASON FOR ARREST

13 MILITARY RECORD OF DEFENDANT
BRANCH RANK SERIAL NUMBER FROM: TO:

14 CALIFORNIA DRIVER'S LICENSE?
☐ YES ☐ NO NUMBER: | DRIVER'S LICENSE IN OTHER STATE
STATE: WHEN? (APPROX.)

15 VEHICLE OWNED OR DRIVEN
MAKE YEAR MODEL AND BODY TYPE COLOR VEHICLE LICENSE PLATE NUMBER

16 LEGAL OWNER (BANK OR FINANCE COMPANY) | ADDRESS

17 SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NO. | UNION LOCAL | OCCUPATION

18 PRESENT OR LAST KNOWN EMPLOYER. NAME OF COMPANY | DATE EMPLOYED FROM: TO:
ADDRESS PHONE

19 IS DEFENDANT ABLE TO WORK AT PRESENT? ☐ YES ☐ NO | IF NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN:

20 WHAT IS DEFENDANT'S AVERAGE INCOME FROM EMPLOYMENT? $ PER ☐ GROSS ☐ NET | DOES DEFENDANT HAVE ANY INCOME OTHER THAN FROM EMPLOYMENT? ☐ YES ☐ NO | IF YES, SOURCE OF INCOME: | AMOUNT $

21 IS DEFENDANT NOW:
☐ MARRIED ☐ DIVORCED ☐ SEPARATED ☐ SINGLE ☐ COMMON-LAW

22 IF DEFENDANT IS NOW MARRIED TO SOMEONE ELSE, FILL IN THESE SPACES. HOW MANY CHILDREN DO THEY HAVE IN COMMON?

23 PRESENT SPOUSE'S NAME
DOES DEFENDANT KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE? ☐ YES ☐ NO | IF NOT, PLEASE EXPLAIN:

NAMES AND AGES OF DEFENDANT'S UNMARRIED MINOR CHILDREN FOR WHOM YOU ARE REQUESTING SUPPORT. IF MOTHER OF THE BELOW LISTED CHILDREN IS NOW PREGNANT, LIST THE CHILD AS UNBORN AND DATE EXPECTED.

24

FIRST AND LAST NAMES	BIRTHDATE	BIRTHPLACE	LIVING WITH

734 REV 9/78

*Figure V-1 is reprinted with permission of the Santa Clara, CA IV-D Agency.

IF YOU WERE MARRIED TO DEFENDANT, FILL IN THE FOLLOWING

25	DATE OF MARRIAGE MONTH DAY YEAR	PLACE OF MARRIAGE CITY STATE	DATE SEPARATED MONTH DAY YEAR	PLACE SEPARATED CITY STATE
26	DATE DIVORCED	ACTION NUMBER	PLACE DIVORCED	
27	NAME OF YOUR ATTORNEY	ADDRESS		PHONE
28	NAME OF DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEY	AMOUNT OF CHILD SUPPORT ORDERED (DO NOT INCLUDE ALIMONY) $ PER MONTH		AMOUNT PAID SINCE DATE OF ORDER $

29 FOLLOWING IS THE RECORD OF CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS MADE BY THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT FOR THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

YEAR	MONTH	AMOUNT	YEAR	MONTH	AMOUNT	YEAR	MONTH	AMOUNT
		$			$			$

FOLLOWING INFORMATION REGARDING YOURSELF ONLY

30	NAME LAST	FIRST	MIDDLE	RELATIONSHIP TO DEFENDANT
31	MAIDEN NAME (IF COMPLAINANT IS MOTHER OF CHILDREN)		ANY OTHER NAME KNOWN BY	
32	PRESENT ADDRESS			PHONE
33	PREVIOUS ADDRESS			DATE (APPROXIMATE)
34	DESCRIPTION: SEX HAIR EYES HEIGHT WEIGHT RACE		BIRTHDATE	BIRTHPLACE CITY STATE
35	EMPLOYER: NAME OF COMPANY	ADDRESS		DATE (APPROXIMATE)
36	SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER	WAGES $ PER MONTH	POSITION	PHONE
37	CALIFORNIA DRIVER'S LICENSE NO.	VEHICLE OWNED OR DRIVEN: MAKE YEAR MODEL & BODY TYPE		COLOR

38 YOUR PRESENT MONTHLY EXPENSES:

RENT OR HOUSE PAYMENT	$	TRANSPORTATION	$	INCIDENTALS	$
FOOD	$	MEDICAL & DENTAL	$	UTILITIES	$
CLOTHING	$	INSURANCE	$		

39 ARE YOU NOW ☐ MARRIED ☐ DIVORCED ☐ SEPARATED ☐ SINGLE ☐ COMMON-LAW	NAMES OF ANY OTHER ADULTS LIVING IN YOUR HOME

40 IF YOU ARE MARRIED TO A PERSON OTHER THAN THE DEFENDANT, GIVE HIS
NAME EMPLOYER

41 DATE OF MARRIAGE	PLACE	HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE BY THIS RELATIONSHIP?
42 HOW MANY OTHER MINOR CHILDREN DOES CURRENT SPOUSE HAVE?	HOW MUCH DOES CURRENT SPOUSE CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR SUPPORT? $ PER	

43 DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER MINOR CHILDREN? ☐ YES ☐ NO	ARE THEY LIVING WITH YOU? ☐ YES ☐ NO	DO THEY RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM THEIR PARENT? ☐ YES ☐ NO	HOW MUCH? $ PER
44 ARE YOU NOW RECEIVING WELFARE ASSISTANCE? ☐ YES ☐ NO	WHEN DID YOU APPLY?	IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED OR RECEIVING WELFARE ASSISTANCE, WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT SOURCE OF INCOME?	

I AM APPLYING FOR THE CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT SERVICES OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY UNDER THE CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM OF TITLE IV-D OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

I WILL NOTIFY THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE OF ANY MARRIAGE OF THE ABOVE CHILDREN, OR REMARRIAGE OF EITHER PARENT OF THESE CHILDREN, ANY CHANGE IN THE ADDRESS OF THE PARENTS OF CHILDREN, ANY INFORMATION REGARDING THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE ABSENT PARENT, OR THEIR RETURN TO HOME. I DECLARE UNDER THE PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT I HAVE EXAMINED THE FOREGOING ANSWERS AND THEY ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____ DATE _____

FIGURE V-2: MOTHER'S PATERNITY QUESTIONNAIRE*

When a child is conceived out of wedlock it is necessary, if at all possible to obtain a court adjudication of paternity. To assist in establishing paternity the following information is needed from the mother of such child:

1. Your name:_____ Your age:_____

2. Name of child in question:_____
   Child's birthdate or expected birthdate:_____
   Place of Birth:_____ When did you become pregnant with this child? Month:_____ Year _____ Weight of child at birth: _____ Was it full term? _____

3. Were you married when you became pregnant?_____ If so, were you living with your husband? _____ Where is he now? _____.

4. Are you married now? _____ If so, give date: _____

5. Name of father of child: _____ Age:_____

6. How did you meet him? _____
   When?_____ Where?_____

7. When did you first begin dating him? _____

8. How long did you date him? _____
   How often? _____

9. When did you first have sexual relations with him? _____

10. How often did you have sexual relations with him? _____

11. Did you and alleged father ever spend time together at a hotel or motel? _____ When?_____ Where? _____

12. Did you ever live together? _____ When? _____ Where?_____
    _____ How long?_____

13. Give names and addresses of persons who knew of your dating, living with, or associating with alleged father: _____
    _____

*Figure V-2 is reprinted with permission of the Santa Clara, CA IV-D Agency.

14. When did you discover you were pregnant?_____ Date of your last period?_____ Did you see a doctor?_____ Who?_____ When?_____ His diagnosis?_____

15. When did you tell alleged father you were pregnant?_____ What was said?_____ Did he offer money?_____ Suggest abortion?_____ Pay any doctor bills?_____ Visit you in hosptial?_____ Buy anything for the child? _____ When?_____ Did he ever visit the child? _____ When?_____

16. Did you ever discuss your condition with the alleged father in the presence of anyone else? _____ Who?_____ When?_____ Where?_____ What was said?_____ _____

17. Did you have sexual relations with anyone except the alleged father within 45 days prior to or 45 days after conception of this child? _____ Who?_____ When?_____

18. Did the father ever admit to anyone he is the father of this child? _____ When?_____ To whom?_____ What did he say? _____

19. Does the baby resemble the father? _____ In what way? _____

20. Who did you give as the father on birth certificate? _____

21. Do you have any letters from alleged father in which the child is mentioned or referred to? _____ Any photo with father and child together?_____

22. What else do you wish to add? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

I declare under penalty of perjury that my answers to these questions are true to the best of my belief.

_____
(Your signature)

DATE: _____

FIGURE V-3: SAMPLE ACTIVITY SHEET

Abbreviations used on Activity Sheet

O	Office
+	Was present in office
T	Telephone
	Subject (payor, defendant, absent parent, etc.)
C	Correspondence
Misc.	Miscellaneous
CH	Court hearing

Date	Activity	Comments
4-6-81	0+	Applicant came in for intake interview. Court order already exists. Says that paternity was established last year in this county. Does not know court order number.
4-8-81	Misc.	Applicant eligible for assistance. Checked dockets and paternity case does exist. Paternity was established on 1-15-80. No child support payment amount was set since the petitioner and defendant were living together at that time.
4-9-81	Misc.	Filed petition with Circuit court to summon the defendant to appear in court on 4-24-81. Purpose is to establish payment amount and have payments monitored by the Child Support Enforcement Office.
4-15-81	C	Received notice from Sheriff's office that has been served with summons.
4-16-81	T	Called to find out what the summons was all about. Explained to him that payments were to be established in court and that he should bring information about financial status and possibly hire an attorney if he objects to making payments. Said that he didn't mind making payments provided that they weren't too high.
4-24-81	CH	Appeared in court without an attorney. Waived his rights to an attorney and said he could pay $20.00 per week. Judge agreed and payments were set at $20.00 per week to commence on 5-1-81.

Date	Activity	Comments
4-24-81	0+	Came to office as directed by the court to be interviewed for directions on how to make payments. Seemed to understand procedure and said would mail in his first payment next week.
6-11-81	C	Two weeks behind in payments. Sent him first warning letter.
6-15-81	T	Called to say that he has temporarily been laid off and will not be able to pay until the end of the month. Says he will definitely be able to catch up on his arrearage by then. Told him to let us know as soon as he gets back to work.
6-26-81	C	Second warning letter sent.
7-8-81	Misc.	Filed petition with court for charges of contempt. Asked for defendant's appearance in court on 7-24-81.
7-20-81	C	Received note from Sheriff's office that defendant has been served with a notice to appear in court.
7-20-81	0+	Came to office to discuss case. Said that he was behind because he had been temporarily laid off for 2 weeks and got behind in his bills. Said that he had been back to work since 7-2-81. Pointed out to him that we had asked him to contact this office as soon as he went back to work. Also pointed out to him that he was not 2 weeks behind but more than a month behind in payments. Told him that we would not withdraw charges of contempt unless he paid his arrearage in full.
7-23-81	Misc.	Received money order for full arrearage. Withdrew charges of contempt.

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT TERMS

Absent Parent	Any individual that is absent from the home and is legally responsible for providing financial support for a dependent child.
Abstract of Judgment	An official, certified copy of a court judgment that states the names of the parties in the case, the amount of the judgment the judge who rendered the judgment, or the court in which it was rendered.
Acknowledged Father	The natural father of a child born out of wedlock for whom paternity has been established by admission or stipulation
Act	Social Security Act.
Action	An ordinary proceeding in a court by which one party prosecutes another.
Adjudication	The entry of a judgment or decree by a judge after all claims of the parties have been heard and a verdict returned.
Administrative Determination Of Support	A support obligation arrived at as a result of the administrative process.
Administrative Enforcement	Powers granted to a State agency by statutes which allow for the attachment and execution outside the judicial system on a responsible parent's assets.
Administrative Process	A quasi-judicial system set up in a State agency by statute for the purpose of setting and enforcing child support obligations.
Admission	A voluntary or implied acknowledgment, confession, or concession of the existence of a fact, or of the truth of an allegation made by a party to the case.
Affidavit	A voluntary or implied acknowledgment, confession, or concession of the existence of a fact, or of the truth of an allegation, made by a party to the case.
Agent	A person authorized by another to act for him or her; a substitute or a deputy, appointed by a person and given discretionary power to act in his behalf.

AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children)	A category of public assistance paid on behalf of children who are deprived of one or both of their parents by reason of death, disability, or continued absence (including desertion) from the home.
Aid	Aid to Families with Dependent Children, emergency assistance, or AFDC-Foster Care.
Allegation	The assertion, declaration, or statement of a party to a case, made in pleading, setting out what is expected to be proved.
Answer	A pleading by the defendant in a civil case that contests or admits the plaintiff's allegations of facts set forth in the complaint.
Appeal	The request of a party to a higher court to review the rulings made in a lower court for possible errors that would justify overruling the lower court's judgment and perhaps granting a new trial.
Applicant	The caretaker relative, the children, and any other individual whose needs are considered in determing the amount of assistance.
Arrearage	The total unpaid support obligation owed by a responsible person.
Assignment	An eligibility requirement for AFDC whereby the applicant/recipient must assign to the State all rights he or she may have in their own behalf or in behalf of a dependent child.
Assistance	Support money or goods granted to a person or family based upon income.
Authorized Person	(P.L. 93-647, Sec. 453(C)(1)(2)(3)) states that: (1) Any agent or attorney of any State having in effect a plan approved under this part, who has the duty or authority under such plans to seek to recover any amounts owed as child support including when authorized under the State plan, any official of a political subdivision); (2) The court which has authority to issue an order against an absent parent for the support and maintenance of a child, or any agent of such court; and (3) The resident parent, legal guardian, attorney, or agent of a child (other than a child receiving aid under Part A of this title) (as determined by regulations prescribed by the secretary) without regard to the existence of a court order against an absent parent who has a duty to support and maintain any such child.

Averment	A positive statement of facts in opposition to an argument or inference.
Bond	A certificate or evidence of obligation with a sum of money fixed as a penalty.
Burden of Proof	The necessity or duty of affirmatively proving a fact in dispute on an issue raised between the parties.
Caretaker	The person responsible for a child's health or welfare who has temporary or legal custody of a dependent child.
Certificate of Service	A signed writing by which a person who served process upon a defendant vouches that the service was performed.
Certify	To vouch formally for the accuracy of facts by a signed writing.
Chattel	An article of personal property.
Circumstantial Evidence	Evidence directed to the surrounding circumstances, whereby existence of the principal fact in issue may be inferred by the exercise of logical reasoning.
Citation	(1) An order or summons by which a defendant is notified of judicial proceedings against him or her, and which directs him or her to appear before a magistrate or judge at a specific time. (2) A reference to the text of a statute, ordinance, or judicial opinion by the use of identifying numbers such as section, volume, or page numbers.
Claim	To demand as one's own; to assert, state, or insist; an allegation made in an action at law.
Code	A collection of the State laws published in one or more volumes, systematically arranged into chapters and sections, with a table of contents and index.
Collateral Facts	Facts outside of or not directly connected with the principal matter in dispute.
Comity	The practice by which courts of one State follow the decision or recognize judgments of another although they are not bound to do so; a willingness to grant a privilege to another State out of courtesy, deference, and good will.

Common Law	A body of law developed from judicial decisions based on custom and precedent.
Complainant	Person who seeks to initiate court proceedings against another person. In a civil case the complainant is the plaintiff; in a criminal case the complainant is the State.
Complaint	The formal written document filed in a court whereby the person initiating the action sets forth the names of the parties, the allegations, and the request for relief sought; the initial pleading.
Contemner	A person who has committed contempt of court.
Continuance	The postponement of a hearing or trial pending in court to a subsequent day.
Cooperation	AFDC applicants' appearance at State or local agencies to provide information, to appear as witnesses at court or other hearings providing information, or complying with assignment regulations.
Corroborating Evidence	Evidence supplementary to that already given and tending to support or strengthen it.
Counsel	Attorney or attorneys for a party.
Courts of Record	Courts whose proceedings are permanently recorded by a court reporter. Courts not of record are those of lesser authority whose proceedings are not permanently recorded.
Creaming	Working those cases that have a high probability of payoff within a short period of time. A method of setting case priorities.
Credibility	That quality in a witness that renders his or her testimony worthy of belief.
Cross-Examination	The examination of a witness by the opposing party to test the truth of his or her testimony, to further develop it, or for other purposes.
Damages	The loss, detriment, or injury suffered by a person through the unlawful act or negligence of another.
Default	The failure of a defendant to file an answer or appear in a civil case within 20 days after having been properly served with a summons and complaint.

Defendant	The person against whom a civil or criminal proceeding is begun.
Department of Health and Human Resources	Formerly the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.
Dependent	A person to whom a duty of support is owed.
Deposition	The testimony of a witness taken before trial, reduced to writing and duly authenticated, and intended to be used at the trial.
Deserted or Abandoned Child	Any child whose eligibility for AFDC is based on continued absence of a parent from the home (e.g., a child from a broken home or a child born out of wedlock).
Detainer	(Unlawful detainer) - The act of withholding real estate or chattels from a person lawfully entitled to possession of them.
Direct Examination	The first interrogation or questioning of a witness by the party on whose behalf he or she is called.
Director	Director, Office of Child Support Enforcement - Secretary's designee to administer the child support enforcement program under Title IV-D.
Discharge in Bankruptcy	The release of a person who has been adjudged bankrupt from the obligation to pay his or her former debts.
Disclaimer	The renunciation of an interest, right, or obligation imputed to a person or alleged to be his or hers; a vendor's disavowal of any promises relating to the quality of the item sold.
Discovery	The disclosure by a party of facts, titles, documents, or other things in his exclusive knowledge or possession, which are necessary to the party seeking the information as a part of a case or action pending in a court.
Discretion	A liberty or privilege allowed to a judge to decide and act in accordance with what is fair, as determined upon the peculiar circumstances of the case, and as discerned by his or her personal wisdom and experience, and guided by the legal principles.

Disposable Earnings	The portion of a wage or salary that is available for use in determining the amount of child support obligations.
Distraint	An administrative procedure authorizing the seizure and sale of assets, or to force appearance before the hearings officer.
Docket	A formal brief record of proceedings in court; minute entries in case files; the court calendar. Some courts refer to filing a paper with the court as docketing.
Due Process	The conduct of legal proceedings according to those rules and principles which have been established in our system of law for the enforcement and protection of private rights. Its most essential elements are a court with proper jurisdiction over the subject matter and the defendant, notice to each party, the opportunity for each party to present evidence and to challenge the opposing party's evidence, orderly procedures, and a neutral and unbiased trier of fact who determines the facts and decides the issues only on the basis of the persuasiveness of relevant evidence properly admitted. Due process is a safeguard against unreasonable, arbitrary, and capricious decisions.
Emancipate	A status of independence of children from their parents due to age or circumstance.
Et al.	(Lat.) An abbreviation of et alii, meaning "and others."
Et seq.	(Lat.) An abbreviation for et sequentes, or et sequentia, meaning "and the following."
Execution	A group of remedies that put final civil judgments into effect by the court commanding a sheriff to take certain actions such as seizing money from a defendant's bank account to pay a judgment won by the plaintiff in a trial.
Exhibit	A writing or other article marked for identification and shown to the trier of fact during a court proceeding.
Ex parte	(Lat.) Done for, in behalf of, or on the application of one party, and without notice to or participation by any adverse party.

Federal Parent Locator Service	The system devised and operated by OCSE for the purpose of searching Federal Government records to locate absent parents.
Felony	Generally, a crime of a more serious nature than those designated as misdemeanors. Usually an offense punishable by imprisonment in a penitentiary rather than in a county or city jail as in the case of misdemeanors. A serious crime as opposed to a misdemeanor which is usually an infraction of statutory law only.
Foreclosure	A proceeding to force the sale of real property to pay an encumbrance.
Fraud	False statements made to State officials with the intent of wrongfully receiving public assistance.
IV-A	Title IV-A of the Social Security Act is that portion of the Federal law covering the public assistance program.
IV-D	Title IV-D of the Social Security Act is that portion of the Federal law covering the support enforcement program.
IV-D Agency	A single and separate organizational unit in a State that has the responsibility for administering the State Plan under Title IV-D of the Act.
Garnishee	The person upon whom a garnishment is served; (verb) to institute garnishment proceedings.
Garnishment	A legal proceeding whereby a person's (defendant's) property, money, or credit in the possession of or under the control of a third person (garnishee) is withheld from the defendant and applied to the payment of the defendant's debt to the plaintiff.
Grant Amount	The amount of public assistance granted to a family.
Guardian	A person having legal control of and obligations of care to a child.
Hearings Officer	A tribunal created by State statute to preside over an administrative hearings process.
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Department no longer includes education, and the name has been officially changed to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Inadmissible	An adjective describing evidence or testimony which, under the established rules of evidence, cannot be considered by the trier of fact.
Incarceration	Imprisonment; confinement in a jail or penitentiary.
Incriminate	To charge with crime; to expose to an accusation or charge of crime; to involve oneself or another in a criminal prosecution or the danger thereof, as in the rule that a witness is not bound to give testimony which is self-incriminating.
Indemnity	A collateral assurance by which one person agrees to assure another against loss or consequences.
Indigent	In a general sense, one who is needy or poor. In a criminal an indigent defendant may be entitled to have an attorney appointed to represent him or her at no cost.
Initial Enforcement Techniques	Methods that may be used to convince an absent parent to pay child support without invoiving a court of law usually centers around personal contact and persuasive arguments.
Initiating State	The State in which a URESA proceeding is commenced and where the obligee is located.
Interest	(1) A right to have an advantage accruing from something, such as a title to a share of ownership. (2) A rate of compensation for the use or forbearance of money, such as interest on a loan; a rate of compensation which must be paid by a judgment debtor. (3) A relation to the matter in controversy, in the nature of a possible gain or loss, which might incline a person such as a juror, witness, or judge to favor one party to a suit.
Interrogatories	A discovery technique where parties clarify the issues of a pending trial by submitting written questions that must be answered under oath.
Judgment	The official decision or finding of a court upon the respective rights and claims of the parties to an action; also known as a decree or order and may include the "findings of fact and conclusions of law."
Judicial Remedies	A general designation for court enforcement of obligations. More specifically it relates to the functions of the judges such as contempt, stay of execution, probation, work release, withheld judgment, garnishment, and involuntary wage assignment.

Judicial Review	A reconsideration or review by a higher court of a case tried in a lower court. Used especially to describe the examination of a case by an appellate court. The review is usually restricted to material error and abuse of judicial discretion.
Jurisdiction	The express constitutional or legislative determination of what types of cases may be heard by certain courts. Before a court has jurisdiction, i.e., in order for the court to invoke its authority to try a case, the legislative criteria prescribing the class of cases which may be heard must be satisfied. This criteria encompasses fixed geographical boundaries, the amount of money involved in a civil action, those parties which may lawfully be brought before the court, the types of civil claims which may be acted upon, and those criminal proceedings which may be conducted. "Concurrent Jurisdiction" - The authority of several different courts to deal with the same subject matter. "Jurisdiction of the person" is the court's power to subject parties in a particular case to decisions and rulings made in the case. "Subject-matter jurisdiction" means jurisdiction over the class of cases to which a particular case belongs. "General Jurisdiction" - Jurisdiction extending to all cases without any limitation as to subject matter. "Limited Jurisdiction" - Jurisdiction extending to only those classes of cases and proceedings specifically granted by statute. Common examples are courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases where the amount in controversy is less than a specified amount, or jurisdiction to try all misdeameanors but to conduct only preliminary hearings of felonies. "Territorial jurisdiction" limits the court's authority to cases arising, or persons residing, within a defined territory, such as a county or a judicial district.
Law Enforcement Officials	District attorneys, attorney generals and similar public attorneys, and prosecutors and their staffs.
Legal Father	A man who is recognized by law as the male parent of another person.

Lien	A remedy utilized by filing a judgment with a county recorder. It acts as an encumbrance on any real property in the county belonging to the obligor.
Litigate	To dispute or contend in form of law; to carry on a suit; to try a case in court.
Mandamus (writ of)	(Lat.; we command) This is an order issued from a court to command performance of specific duties which the complainant is entitled to have performed. It is generally directed to government officials or to a court of lesser jurisdiction.
Marginal Cost	The amount added to cost (expenditures) which results from processing one more case.
Marginal Revenue	The amount added to revenue (collections) which results from processing one more case.
Material	(Referring to evidence offered at a trial) Important; more or less necessary; having influence or effect; going to the substantial issues in dispute.
Misdemeanant	A person guilty of a misdemeanor.
Misdemeanor	Offenses lower than felonies and generally those punishable by a fine or imprisonment other than in a penitentiary of less than 1 year.
Mistrial	An invalid trial that cannot stand in law because of a disregard of some fundamental procedure.
Mitigating Circumstances	Facts, conditions, or circumstances which do not constitute a justification or excuse for an offense, but which may be considered as reducing the degree of moral blame.
Moral Turpitude	Conduct contrary to justice, honesty, modesty, or good morals.
Motion	An application to a magistrate or judge for an order or ruling.
Motion to Strike	A motion to the judge requesting that objectionable testimony of a witness be ruled inadmissible, i.e., that the judge strike the testimony from the record or instruct the jury to strike a statement from their consideration.

Negligence	The omission to do something which a reasonable man or woman, guided by those considerations which ordinarily regulate human affairs, would do, or the doing of something which a reasonable and prudent person would not do, which causes injury to another.
Net Return	Amount of collections less amount of expenditures.
Nolo Contendere	(Lat.; I will not contest it.) A plea by the defendant in a criminal case which has the effect of admitting guilt, but which does not bar him or her from denying liability in a civil suit brought upon the same facts. This is not an acceptable plea in many courts.
Non-PA	Child support cases where the custodial parent is not receiving public assistance.
Notarize	The administration of an oath to a person by a public officer who then attests and certifies, by his or her signature and official seal on the document, that the person who signed the document was, in fact, the person whose name appeared thereon.
Objection	The act of a party who takes exception to some matter of proceeding in the course of a trial or hearing.
Obligation	The legal amount of support owed for the benefit of children as ordered by a court or administrative procedure.
Obligee	The person to whom a duty of support is owed.
Obligor	The person owing a duty of support.
OCSE	Office of Child Support Enforcement, HEW.
Opening Statement	A statement by a party or his attorney at the beginning of a trial whose purpose is to advise the jury of facts which will be relied upon and of issues in the case in order to give the trier of fact a general picture of the facts.
Opinion	The statement by a judge or appellate court of the decision reached in regard to a case tried before them, expounding the law as applied to the case, and detailing the reasons upon which the judgment is based.

Order	Every direction of a magistrate or judge to a person, made or entered in writing, and not included in a judgment.
Ordinance	A rule established by authority; a law or statute. In the more common usage, the term is used to designate the enactments of the legislative body of a municipal corporation, such as a city, town, or village.
Overrule	To refuse to sustain, or recognize as sufficient, an objection made in the course of a trial.
Out-of-State Case	Any support case where one of the parties resides outside the State.
Paternity Case	An action to determine the parentage of a child born out-of-wedlock.
Payee	Caretaker other than mother or father of child.
Pecuniary	Relating to money. A pecuniary interest would be a financial interest; i.e., a person may gain or lose money because of some event, action, or judgment in a court case.
Penal	Relating to punishment.
Pendente Lite	Pending the suit; during the actual progress of a suit.
Personal Property	Any property (such as cash, liquid assets, automobiles etc.) other than real property belonging to an individual.
Personal Service	Any property other than real property belonging to an individual.
Plaintiff	A person who brings an action; the party who complains or sues in a civil case.
Plea	The answer by the defendant in a criminal case to the charge brought against him or her.
Pleading	Written allegation filed with the court of what is affirmed on one side and denied on the other, disclosing to the court or jury the issue between the parties.

Pleading Practice	The process performed by the parties to an action by alternately presenting written statements of their contention. Each pleading is responsive to that which precedes, and each serves to narrow the field of controversy until the evolvement of a single point, affirmed on one side and denied on the other (called an "issue") on which the parties then go to trial.
Pocket Part	The annual supplements to the State Code or similar publications which report the latest statutes or cases to make the books current. They are inserted in the back cover of each volume.
Prayer	A request contained in a pleading that the court will grant relief requested.
Precedent	An adjudged case or decision that serves as an example or authority for an identical or similar case or similar question of law.
Preliminary Hearing or Examination	The hearing or examination given by a judge, to a person accused of a crime, to ascertain whether there is probable cause to require the commitment and holding to bail of the person accused. It is not a trial for the determination of the accused's guilt or innocence. A preponderance of evidence is all that is required to sustain the burden of proof, not beyond a reasonable doubt. The accused usually does not testify, and usually uses the hearing to test the strength of the State's case.
Preponderance of the Evidence	Evidence with a superiority of persuasion. A judge cannot properly render a verdict upon evidence in favor of the one having the burden of proof, unless such evidence overbears, in some degree, the persuasiveness of the other side's evidence. This is the burden required in civil cases. A higher standard is required of the prosecution in a criminal case.
Prima facie Case	Evidence which is legally sufficient to establish a fact or case unless disproved.
Prioritization	The classification of cases in descending order of their potential for collections. It is accomplished by isolating case characteristics and by determining their potential influence on collection success or failure.

Probable Cause	An apparent state of facts found to exist which would induce a reasonably intelligent and prudent man to believe, objectively, that the accused person committed the crime charged, or when issuing a search warrant that evidence relating to a crime is located in a particular place.
Probation	Allowing a person convicted of some offense to go at large, under a suspension of sentence, during good behavior, and under the supervision of a probation officer.
Prohibition	An order issued by a court halting the proceedings of a lower court or agency because the lower court or agency has exceeded its jurisdiction.
Prompt Notice	Written notice to IV-D by IV-A within 2 working days of the furnishing of aid including a copy of the AFDC case record or all relevant information as prescribed by the child support agency.
Pro se	(Lat.) For himself; in his or her own behalf; without a lawyer.
Prosecutor	A public official who prosecutes a criminal case in the name of the government.
Prosecutrix	A female prosecutor.
Public Assistance	Support money or goods granted to a person or family based on income.
Punitive Damages	Often a large money judgment against a defendant to pay the plaintiff more than his or her actual loss, intended to punish the defendant for his willful misconduct and to deter the defendant and other persons from similar wrongful conduct in the future.
Putative Father	Alleged father. A person who has been named as the father of a child born out-of-wedlock, but for whom paternity has not been established.
Quash	To vacate, annul, or avoid a court order or process especially to annul a summons or indictment.
Rate of Return	The ratio of dollars collected to dollars spent.
Real Party in Interest	The party having the right to relief in an action; not an assignee.

Real Property	Land or land-related property, such as houses and buildings.
Reasonable	Fit and appropriate to the end in view (syn.: rational, honest, equitable, fair, suitable, moderate, tolerable).
Reasonable Doubt	The state of mind of the judge in a criminal trial who does not have an abiding conviction to a moral certainty that the evidence has proved the defendant's guilt.
Rebuttal	The stage in a trial where a party introduces new evidence to contradict the evidence and affirmation defenses presented by the opposing party.
Recipient	A person who receives public assistance.
Recognizance	A legally recorded obligation requiring the performance of some act.
Record	A precise written history of a court action from commencement to termination designed to remain as permanent evidence of the matters to which it relates.
Redirect Examination	Examination of a witness by the party who called the witness. It is conducted after cross-examination, to rehabilitate the witness or amplify matters discussed in cross-examination.
Regional Office	The Regional Office of Child Support Enforcement.
Regulation	A rule or order promulgated by a governmental administrative agency.
Release	The relinquishment of a right or claim against a person; an affirmation defense in a civil case.
Relevancy	Quality of evidence which bears directly on a fact in issue and tends to prove the existence or nonexistence of a fact.
Remand	When a higher court returns a case to a lower court for additional action.
Removal of Causes	Transfer of a case for trial from one court to a court of different jurisdiction or one judge to another.

Reporter	(1) A person who records court proceedings for the purpose of preparing an official record thereof; (2) a commercial publication that contains judicial opinions, such as the Southeastern Reporter published by West Publishing Co.
Responding State	A State receiving and acting on an interstate child support case.
Return	A document filed by a person making personal service upon a party that swears to the fact of service and to the surrounding circumstances.
Responsible Parent	Any individual that is legally responsible to provide financial support for a dependent child.
Rule	A standard, guide, or regulation either promulgated by an entity possessing supervisory authority or accepted by tradition as principle of law.
Satisfaction	The discharge of an obligation by paying a party what was awarded to him by the judgment of a court.
Secretary	Secretary of Health and Human Resources. (Formerly Health, Education, and Welfare.)
Seizure	The taking of an object from its possessor or custodian by a law enforcement officer.
Service by Publication	Service of a summons or other process upon an absent or nonresident defendant, or an unincorporated business association defendant, by publishing the same in a designated newspaper, with such other efforts to give the defendant actual notice of a case pending against him. Usually this procedure is specifically set forth and authorized by a statute. Only the court can authorize such service and will do so only when personal service has failed.
Service of Process	The delivery of a writ, summons, or other notice to the party to whom it is directed for the purpose of obtaining personal jurisdiction over and notice to that party.
Show Cause	A court order directing a person to appear and bring forth such evidence as one has to offer reasons why the remedies stated in the order should not be confirmed or excecuted. A show cause order is usually based on a motion and affidavit asking for relief.

State Parent Locator Service	The organization in a State charged with the duty of locating absent parents for the purpose of establishing or enforcing child support obligations.
State	The individual States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.
State Plan	The State Plan for child support under section 454 of the Social Security Act.
Statute of Limitations	A legislative enactment that prescribes the period of time within which a civil suit must be brought upon a certain claim. In criminal law, the statute of limitations determines the time within which the State must initiate a prosecution for an offense.
Statutes	Laws enacted by legislatures; they are arranged into codes.
Statutory Agent	A person appointed by statute, often the Secretary of State to receive service of process for nonresident corporation defendants.
Stay	An order by a magistrate or judge stopping court proceedings.
Stipulation	An agreement between parties through their attorneys, if any, respecting business before the court. Most stipulations are required to be in writing.
Subpoena	The legal process ordering a witness to appear in a certain court at a specified time to testify.
Subpoena duces tecum	The legal process by which the court commands a witness who has in his possession or control some specified document or item that may be pertinent to the issues of a pending controversy to produce it at trial or some other official hearing.
Subrogate	To place one in the legal position of another and to assume their rights and obligations.
Substantive Law	Law that governs the rights, duties, and liabilities of the parties and defines the issues that the evidence must prove.

Substituted Service	Any form of service of process other than personal service such as service by mail or by publication in a newspaper; service of a writ or notice on some person other than the one directly concerned; for example, his or her attorney of record, who has authority to represent him or her or to accept service for him.
Suggested Execution	A levy on a person's present or past wages to satisfy judgment.
Sum Certain	A specific amount of money; usually refers to the amount of debt.
Summons	A notice to a defendant that an action against him has been commenced in the court issuing the summons and that a judgment will be taken against him if he fails to answer the complaint within a specified time.
Surety	A person who incurs an obligation to pay money on behalf of another person in the event of the occurrence of a specified contingency.
Suspended Sentence	A sentence which is not put into effect, although since it may take effect at a later date, it is not considered vacated.
Sustain	To support or uphold a verdict, decision, objection, etc.
Testimonial Evidence	Proof offered by the testimony of witnesses; i.e., oral evidence, as distinguished from proof by writings, demonstrations, or articles.
Title	Title IV-D of the Social Security Act.
Tort	A private or civil wrong or injury to another person independent of a contract. Three elements of every tort action are: existence of a legal duty from defendant to plaintiff, breach of duty, and damage as an approximate result.
Trial de novo	A new trial or retrial held in a higher court in which the whole case is gone into as if no trial had been held in a lower court.
Unreasonable Search and Seizure	An examination or inspection by an agent of the government without authority of law, of one's premises or person and the seizure of some evidence of guilt to be used in prosecution for crime.

URESA (Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act)	A uniform law which sets forth reciprocal legislation concerning the enforcement of support between the States. All States have passed a form of URESA.
Venue	The county or other geographical division in which an action or prosecution is brought for trial.
Veracity	Truthfulness; the power of conveying or perceiving truth.
Verdict	The formal decision made by a trial jury as to matters of fact submitted to it.
Wage Assignment	The right of a person to tranfer through automatic deductions from his or her wages money to pay some debt such as child support; the assignment may be voluntary or involuntary. In a voluntary assignment the wage earner agrees to such a withholding. In an involuntary assignment the court orders the wage earner to assign wages or suffer a contempt finding.
Waiver	The intentional and voluntary relinquishment of a known legal right.
Warrant	A writ issued by a judicial officer commanding and granting authority to a peace officer to perform some act. "Arrest warrant" - A written order issued and signed by a judge and directed to a peace officer or some other official commanding him to arrest a person named, who is accused of an offense. "Search warrant" - A writ issued by a judge to a sheriff or other law enforcement officer, commanding him to search certain premises and seize certain items and bring them before the issuing judge.
Willful	Done intentionally as distinguished from carelessly, inadvertently, or accidently.
Withhold and Deliver	An execution remedy ordering a third party to withhold property belonging to the obligor. The party may be required to turn the property over to the plaintiff.
Writ	An order issuing from a court and requiring the performance of a specified act, or giving authority and permission to have it done.

Writ of Attachment	A court order employed to enforce obedience to an order or judgment of the court. 1. A warrant for the arrest of a person who is in contempt of court (body attachment or bench warrant). 2. A writ ordering the sheriff to seize the defendant's chattels or bank account in a civil case to prevent the defendant from hiding it or disposing of it before trial. 3. A writ of fieri facias.
Writ of fieri facias	A court order directing a sheriff to seize money or personal property of a defendant to satisfy a money judgment held by the plaintiff. More commonly called a writ of attachment.
Writ of Possession	A court order directing a sheriff to seize specific real property of a defendant to satisfy a judgment for that property held by the plaintiff. Most commonly, it is used to evict tenants from landlord's property.

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